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OBSERVATIONS  
ON THE PRESENT STATE  
OF THE  
PROFESSION & TRADE OF  
MEDICINE,

AS PRACTISED BY

PHYSICIANS, SURGEONS, APOTHECARIES, CHEMISTS, DRUGGISTS,  
AND QUACKS IN THE METROPOLIS AND THROUGHOUT  
THE COUNTRY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

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BY JEREMIAH JENKINS, ESQ.

LATE PRACTITIONER IN MEDICINE.

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TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE AND HONOURABLE  
THE MEMBERS OF THE  
BRITISH LEGISLATURE,  
*THIS WORK,*  
EXPOSING A TRAFFIC  
WHICH NOT ONLY TAMPERS WITH THE LIVES  
OF HIS MAJESTY'S SUBJECTS,  
BUT REFLECTS DISGRACE ON THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THIS COUNTRY,  
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,  
BY THEIR MOST OBEDIENT,  
AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT  
THE AUTHOR.



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## PREFACE.

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**T**HE remarks on the state of the medical profession in Great Britain contained in the following sheets are principally taken from a late publication, entitled, “A Selection of Interesting Cases in Surgery, Medicine, Midwifery, &c. by a society of practical Physicians, Surgeons, Apothecaries, and Chemists in London\*.” The compiler hav-

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\* The editors of this valuable publication, by their manful exposition of medical traffic, are entitled to the thanks of their country. To the editors of the Monthly Compendium of Medicine and Surgery, &c. the author is also much indebted for many valuable observations.

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ing ascertained the truth of the statements, he thought it a duty to submit the most prominent parts to the consideration of the Legislative Body of this country, in order that the members may not be ignorant of the disgraceful practices, both of regular men and licensed quacks, when the important subject of medical reform is discussed in their august assemblies. On the necessity of the measure, the editors of the *Monthly Compendium of Medicine, &c.* observe, “The reform of the medical profession has been long a favourite subject, and the necessity for it is in the mouth of every practitioner. The execution of such a desirable scheme continues to be prevented by three causes: the connexion of the legislature with empiricism; the monopoly of the London College, and the want of concert among the practitioners who do not belong to this body. It is only by removing these obstacles that the progress of reform could proceed. Empiricism brings from the stamp-duties attached to it, a considerable revenue to government; and since the le-



gislature is, on all occasions, ready to support the revenue as the sinews of the state, this could only be done by a tax on the profession equivalent to the loss of stamp duties. Such a tax would be very trifling, and, by promoting the interests of the profession, would produce a profit instead of a loss to every practitioner; for the quantity of empirical medicines consumed is a certain injury to the lower orders of the profession, both as apothecaries and druggists. The second obstacle to reformation,—the monopoly of the London College, at the present period, may be considered as a disgrace to science. That a monopoly should be allowed to exist in favour of one class of men specially bred at the English universities, seminaries, noted as deficient in a medical education, and where it is impossible to form a real practical physician, on their present establishments, is a reflection of the most glaring kind on the legislature of the country. This monopoly, it is clear, was granted under circumstances which no longer exist. When science in general

was confined to one spot, and when medicine and its professors were intimately connected with the church establishments of the day, to produce professional improvement, at that period, such a monopoly was perhaps necessary ; but the circumstances which approved this monopoly have been long passed ; the connexion between the churchman and physician has been long parted, and the seminary which is best fitted to make the theologian, where he can wander through the silence and solitude of the academic grove, and ponder on the works of the fathers, or be lost in metaphysical research, is certainly not suited as a school for an active profession, which is occupied in the busy haunts of men, and where experience in the walks of life forms a chief part of study, and the very means of acquiring improvement. However necessary then, for the improvement of medicine, such a monopoly might be at the time of Henry VIII. it will be admitted, at the present day it no longer exists. Society has changed its form, and the gratitude of



the legislature is more due to the exertions of the Surgeon than to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Where are the greater number of medical men bred, to whom the care of the army and navy is committed? Ought not those universities, and the pupils of them, who have fought and bled for their country, or who have at least taken care of her warriors under the pressure of disease and the accidents of warfare, to be remunerated equally as the universities who breed only the drones of civil life? The practice of the metropolis is looked upon as the most profitable to the profession; if such be the case, ought these men, to whom their country is indebted so much, when they retire from active service, to be deprived the recompense, for I would call it such, of being settled in the metropolis, in their professional character, and perhaps among the circle of their friends, by an obsolete monopoly? Is the remuneration from government such that they can live without further employment? If the legislature reflect on this circumstance, in-

dependent of any other, they must be sensible of the injustice of the continuance of such restrictions as the London College impose. But is not the same restriction equally a matter of hardship and injury to the lieges of the metropolis? It is saying, in the way of commandment, thou shalt employ a member of the London College, in the hour of thy sickness; and no other physician, whatever thy opinion of his merits may be, shalt thou have to administer unto thee: so wills the charter of Henry VIII. and so the British parliament of the forty-second year of George III. confirms;—for where the charter is not annulled, the present legislature is certainly accountable for its orders and imperfections. Even the College themselves are not insensible of the injury of their monopoly, but, like all those who possess exclusive privileges, they cling to them to the last, and beyond the period that prudence should dictate their continuance. They know their charter does not apply to the present state of medical practice, and to



mould it and amend it to the fashion of the day without losing hold of the original gift, they have been under the necessity of enacting such a number of bye-laws, that they exceed the original ones. Till this bar then is removed; till the practice of the metropolis is laid open equally with the country at large, to every one who is competent to the exercise of his profession, without regard to mode of education, or the particular spot where he has acquired it, no professional reformation can be expected.

The third obstacle, or the want of concord among the reformers themselves, is as formidable a bar as any other. In the present state of the British legislature, it is by a party alone that every thing is carried. A firm phalanx, where their object is just and tenable, will always succeed, and accumulate gradually in strength and importance, so as to render their fair claims irresistible. What is to be expected, where the discordant nature of the parties renders their connexion very like a rope of sand?

The college, as a body, have the ear of the executive power, and it is only by a concerted plan, through every part of the country uniting its ramifications in the metropolis, that this great and necessary change can be brought about. We would recommend then, that all the unlicensed physicians of the metropolis should form a society for such professional reform, as the present improved state of society, and the progress made in all the other departments of science, warrant,—that this society should possess corresponding branches through the country at large; and, to meet the pressure of power and influence which the college possesses, the reasons of reformation should be urged by this society, in a strong manner, to all members of the legislature who reside in every part. It is not a question of politics, it is one of public good, and the interests of humanity. If the country physicians are zealous in the cause of reformation, it could not be opposed. No country member would wish to differ from the opinion of the physician



who attends him, and who has an influence over his mind, on a subject where that physician must be the best judge. He can then say to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he wants to adjourn, as formerly, the consideration of the question *sine die*, that he has an interest here, the care of his *own health*, and the opinion of the men to whom he intrusts it. It is by this means, or the influence of the country physician, that the monopoly of the college is to be overturned. No country gentleman will wish to offend the guardian of his health, on a professional subject, where the latter is most competent to decide. It is only, therefore, by forming a chain of this kind, that this host of monopoly can be annihilated, and the fair dawn of medical freedom and science made to arise. Forming plans, and writing circular letters for information, is of no use, without the individuals, engaging in the great and good work, exert at the same time all their private influence for the same laudable purpose. The defects and professional

abuses are already sufficiently known to call for reformation, and the reformation wanted is simple and clear.—The abolition of quackery, by the substitution of an equivalent revenue from the profession, and the destruction of medical monopoly, by opening professional honours to all who are competent to undergo a proper examination: this is doing away defects on fair and just grounds, equally friendly to the interests of science and humanity, and on grounds which no member of the college dares openly to condemn.

Sir Lucas Pepys has signified to the Benevolent Medical Society of Lincolnshire, that their plan of medical reform will be opposed by the College of Physicians,—was not Sir Lucas also averse to the late change which has taken place in the medical department of the army? When the subject is brought before the House of Commons by Dr. Harrison, the necessity of a reform in the medical profession of London and throughout the country, will appear equally manifest. The opposition of this body



can have little weight with thinking men.—Of the abilities of Sir Lucas the House of Commons have lately had an opportunity of forming their own estimate. Of the necessity of a medical reform, the House of Commons need no other proof than the Pharmacopœia lately published by the college. By the whimsical changes of names, they have sown the seeds of endless confusion—and which will be productive of the most serious consequences. The college deputed Dr. Powel, one of their fellows, to translate their pharmacopœia into the English language, for the purpose of extending an acquaintance with its processes to apothecaries. In the translation for directing the apothecaries in the preparing of medicines to administer to his patients in the trying hour of sickness, there are upwards of fifty errors; some of which absolutely endanger the lives of his majesty's subjects\*. Does

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\* Speaking of the “arsenical solution,” (commonly called the white drop) which is one of the most powerful poisons; he says, “each ounce

not such culpable carelessness demand legislative interference? Are not the king and his council, who have sanctioned the work, insulted by it?

No physician should be allowed to practice physic who is not acquainted with pharmacy and surgery.

No apothecary should be permitted to attend patients who, independent of hav-

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contains four grains of the oxyde, and each drachm  $\frac{1}{8}$ th [ $\frac{1}{2}$ !] of a grain; but it will rarely be proper to go beyond half the latter quantity one-fourth, or one-sixteenth of a grain as a dose." Here this most accurate arithmetician and learned mathematical Doctor actually prescribes FOUR times the quantity of a deadly poison which he really intended!!! Now we would ask, if an apothecary should follow Dr. P.'s directions, and prescribe half an ounce of arsenic solution for a dose, or an apothecary prepare such a quantity, whether should Dr. P. the prescribing physician, or the apothecary, be executed for *murder*? For we affirm, that such a dose, given under such circumstances, would be followed by death, in every two cases out of three. The law, indeed, would *consider* such acts merely as *homicide*; but there is a higher tribunal, to which all must be responsible, as well for their presumptuous ignorance and carelessness as for their designs.



ing served an apprenticeship of three or four years to a practical apothecary, has not attended the practice of some hospital for two years, and two courses of lectures on anatomy, surgery, physic, the materia medica, and chemistry.

The court of examiners should consist of a member of each of the English, Scotch, and Irish universities. That no man should be refused an examination on account of his not having received his education at an university, and that the court be empowered to confer degrees on persons properly educated.

In order the better to ascertain the qualifications of the candidate, the examination should be conducted in his vernacular tongue; and if a knowledge of Latin or Greek, or both, be deemed necessary, let the candidate be examined in them separately.

That no assistant be employed by an apothecary to compound prescriptions, who has not served an apprenticeship, and been

found qualified for the office by the court of examiners.

That no nostrum be allowed to be sold, or advertised as a remedy for any disease, that has not been approved of by the court of examiners.

As the treatment of disease must be varied according to the constitution and habits of the patient, and as one disease is often complicated with another, and attended with peculiarity of system which may render the remedy proper for one complaint highly injurious in another; and as diseases often occur to which we can give no name, the sale of nostrums must necessarily be highly injurious to the community. No man acquainted with the nature of disease can therefore sanction them.

As the revenue would suffer considerably by the abolition of the traffic of quackery, every physician, surgeon, and apothecary, should pay to government a certain sum annually for a licence, so as to be adequate to the income produced to government by quackery.



That no person be allowed to practise surgery without a licence from the College of Surgeons, and that the money for the licence be paid to government.

That no surgeon be allowed to retain the appointment of surgeon to a London hospital longer than twelve months, so that the members of the College of Surgeons may have the advantage of holding the appointment for twelve months in rotation.

The advantages resulting from such regulations are incalculable.—The patients of the hospitals would not only be better attended, but it would be the means of calling forth the genius of young surgeons, who for the want of such opportunity are now kept in the back ground. The monopoly of the practice of the London hospitals by surgeons, is a disgrace to the country.—The primary object of these institutions was, to mitigate the sufferings of our fellow creatures labouring under the complicated misfortunes of poverty and disease, and not the benefit of a few individuals.—The government of most of

them, if not all, are absolutely in the hands of the medical attendants, whose pupils only are in consequence deemed eligible to become candidates in case of a vacancy.—The premiums they obtain with them is therefore enormous.—Is not this making merchandize of the miserable?—The sum divided annually among the medical men of one hospital, amounts to ten thousand pounds! See Observations on Bartholomew's Hospital, in the volume of Selection of Cases in Medicine, Surgery, &c.

The adulteration of drugs, or the substitution of them in compounding medicines, should be a capital offence.



OF  
THE STATE OF THE  
MEDICAL PROFESSION,  
IN  
*GREAT BRITAIN.*

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CHAP. I.

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THE practice of medicine in its comprehensive sense is conducted in this country by *physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries*. When the art of the surgeon was confined to operations, and the manual treatment of external diseases, and that of the apothecary to the compounding of medicines, they were independent of each other: but of late years the science of surgery has opened a more extensive field, and the apothecary having by custom established his right to prescribe for patients (even within the un-

disputed limits of the College of Physicians) he no longer confines his studies to pharmacy, but devotes a portion of his time to the acquirement of a knowledge of the different branches of the healing art. The practice of the surgeon is no longer limited to the mechanical part of medicine, for as it redounds more to his credit to save a limb than to imputate it, he is led to trace local diseases to their original source ; and long experience having taught him that the most formidable external disease may be cured by improving the general health of the patient, his province necessarily embraces an extensive chirurgical pathology, and in the history of modern medicine the surgeon is the most prominent character.

The practice of the apothecary in most other countries is confined to the art of preparing drugs and compounding the prescription of the surgeon and physician, and in no respect differs from the business of a retail druggist in London. But the apothecary of this country is qualified by education to attend at the bed-side of the sick,



and being in general better acquainted with pharmacy than the physicians of the English universities, and not less versed in anatomy, physiology, and pathology, is often the most successful practitioner. The most laborious part of the practice falls upon him, while the physician, although he has no pretension to superiority of judgment or skill, reaps the emolument, and assumes the merit of the cure.

From the departments of surgery and pharmacy the most eminent physicians this country has produced have emanated, and although they have been branded by the epithet of “*irregular men*,” by the graduates of the English universities, their talents and indefatigable labours to promote the healing art, have enhanced the dignity of the profession; and their admission into the class of physicians has done honour to the universities, who have so liberally conferred on them an honorary degree.\*

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\* A very curious letter from Dr. Solomon published in the vol. of “Selection of interesting Ca-

To form a just estimate of the abilities and industry of the London College of Physicians, let us examine the history and progress of medicine since the time of Hippocrates. The only question is, has it been stationary or retrograde?—the answer is clear: Is not

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sse," &c. p. 246, contains the following very pertinent remarks on this subject :

“ Not content with traducing the characters of the advertisers, you have made many illiberal remarks on the universities of Aberdeen, and St. Andrews, for having granted honorary diplomas to “ ignorant and designing men.” You dare not, however, say who those designing men are ! That ignorant men have obtained honorary degrees from these universities, I do not mean to deny : but if the most satisfactory certificates of these men’s abilities be produced, who is most culpable, the college that grants them, or the person who was so base as to sign the certificates ? Will the fellows of the London College of Physicians deny that the testimonials of the medical abilities of some ignorant, or even advertising men, have not been signed by some of their members ? Besides gentlemen, do not your English universities grant honorary degrees ? or even for a resident diploma, do the candidates undergo any examination in medicine, or after going through a routine of ten years residence, have they not a choice of a degree either



the late London Pharmacopœia a melancholy proof of the retrograde state of medicine? The physicians of the present day are not more successful in the treatment of diseases, and to their history they can add nothing new. At the time the charter was

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in physic or divinity? If the doctor's degree in physic has been conferred on men ignorant even of the first rudiments of medicine, by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, are they not equally reprehensible, and can such men be considered in any other light than medical impostors?"

This letter is the best defence of quackery that has ever been published, and proves that it is chiefly supported by the practices of regular men. Does not the following letter, which appears in the same work, page 403, indirectly accuse Dr. Saunders of having signed the certificate which procured for Dr. Brodum the degree of doctor of physic, from the marischal college, Aberdeen?

*"To Dr. William Saunders, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, of London.*

"SIR,

"Having been informed that the certificate which procured for Mr. Brodum the degree of M. D. from the marischal college of Aberdeen, has the signature of a Dr. Saunders, I beg to enquire thus publicly, whether you did recommend the said

granted to the college of physicians of London, it cannot be said that medicine had escaped from the trammels of superstition ; and surgery was then at a very low ebb. The physicians of that period were pompous, conceited, and overbearing, and as much acquainted with the mean artifices of

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William Brodum to the professors of physic of that university ; and if so, whether you really think his professional abilities entitle him to that distinguished honour ? By these questions I beg to assure you, I do not mean that you had any connection with the said William Brodum, but only to give you an opportunity publicly to declare that you are not the person who did recommend him.

“ I am, sir, *your obedient servant*.”

“ A FRIEND TO SCIENCE.”

The author having given up his name to the Editors, did it not behove Dr. Saunders to make some kind of reply to it ? As the Doctor has thought proper to decline it, it is incumbent on the College of Physicians or the Legislature, to demand the certificate from the marischal college ; for if the marischal college have so abused their power, as to confer degrees on men so totally ignorant of medicine, it is incumbent on the legislature not only to deprive it of the power of doing it for the future, but to inflict on it some exemplary punishment.



imposing on the credulous public, as the most impudent advertising quack of the present day. The bushy wig, the golden headed cane, the grave countenance, and an ostentatious show of learning, were certainly well calculated in those days of ignorance and credulity to inspire confidence, and to engross the attention of the mind; and so are the false promises of the quack; The remedies they employed, were also such as were likely to produce a great impression on the mind, as powder of human skull, dried toads, living spiders, the sacred elixir, the blessed pill, &c. Through their operation on the mind, they were no doubt often successful in nervous and other diseases, and so are the advertised nostras of empirics.

The surgeon of the present day is a friend to real science, and generally speaking, not a slavish follower of the opinions of his teacher, but in all cases dares to think for himself. The surgeons of the London hospitals and the provincial infirmaries are men of sound judgment, accurate reason-

ing, and acute observation: and when the practice of physic is united to surgery, we may expect that medicine will make some progress to improvement. That surgery has been improved by the labours of the moderns, no man acquainted with the practice will dispute. Let humanity decide, and the case will soon be determined. Is the surgeon of the present day a more successful practitioner than his predecessors? The reply is obvious. Are hot irritating oils any longer poured on gun-shot wounds? Are not wounds quickly cured by the adhesive inflammation, which required months by the former methods of suppuration? Is not the stump of an amputated limb healed in a few weeks? Does the wound after the extirpation of a cancerous mamma require any thing more than mild superficial dressings? To pursue this subject minutely is however unnecessary; we need only select an instance or two to prove that the surgeon, by his indefatigable attention to improve his art, and thus lessen the sum of human misery, is entitled to the gratitude



of his country and the protection of the legislature. In hernia the operation was precarious and ill understood; it was consequently seldom attempted. The modes of reduction were little known, and the trusses so imperfectly calculated for the purpose, that when reduced, the intestine was seldom retained, and often injured by partial pressure. In lithotomy, the means were limited and inadequate. The method described by Celsus was from its nature confined to the age of from 9 to 14. How many years previous, how very many subsequent to that age, must have been spent in unsufferable agonies! what then was the attempt? first with the greater apparatus, and secondly in the higher way. Even when it succeeded to save life, an incontinence of urine frequently followed, and in great numbers it failed. When Frere Jacques pointed out the lateral operation, how crude and imperfect were his first ideas! The grooved staff and cutting gorget, were the improvements of very late years. But previous even to the latter, Cheselden had

so far simplified the operation that a surgeon may safely perform it in the dark. That the art of surgery has therefore of late years been in a progressive state of improvement, cannot admit of a doubt ; and from the ardour with which it is cultivated by the able professors of it in London, Dublin\*, and Edinburgh, much may still be expected.

The extension of science and the progress of philosophy have within these few years: unveiled the mysteries of medicine, and developed its principle for the instruction of mankind. That every individual is interested in the preservation of his own health, is a truism the most prejudiced

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\* We are happy to find that surgery is now more cultivated by the professors in Dublin than at any former period. The pupils not only obtain their instruction at one third the expence they can in London, but they experience more attention from the surgeons of the Hospital. They have also the advantage of being entitled to a licence from the College of Physicians of London, should they ever wish to practice physic within their jurisdiction.



fellow of the college of physicians will not dare to oppose; and that an invalid has a right to consult the medical man of whose abilities he entertains the best opinion, cannot be disputed. Since disease is the lot of humanity, and health the greatest blessing mortals enjoy, it is natural for man to endeavour to acquire such information of the healing art as will enable him to mitigate the former, and secure the latter. Domestic Medicine, the parent of regular medicine, has in consequence been lately cultivated, so as to form more or less with every person an object of particular attention; and the public in this respect, has been seconded by medical men of liberal minds\*.

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\* A late writer, to whom the public is indebted for the best work on this subject, observes, "It is very common for members of the medical profession to speak in terms of contempt of systems of domestic medicine; they do not consider that we are indebted to chance for our most important discoveries. Some degree of disease has pervaded all communities, and it is natural for all to be concerned about the means of restoring health, and of alleviating the sufferings of sickness.

This diffusion of a knowledge of medicine has proved fatal to its mysteries and charms. The public has long discovered

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“Physicians are no more than the appendages of luxury. Rome existed for ages without a physician. There have been polished courts even in modern times, in which the office, and almost the name of a physician, was unknown. White-lock, who was ambassador to the court of Sweden, from our protector, Cromwell, reports that the Queen Christiana had no physician, and we may therefore presume that Stockholm did not furnish one in the seventeenth century.

“In a state of society to which there were no physicians by profession, all enlightened men, heads of families, and particularly the ministers of religion, would study with attention the phænomena of disease and the effects of medicine, and be much engaged in gratuitously succouring the afflicted. It is paying a very humble compliment to their understanding, to suppose them not as competent to this benevolent office, as the majority of our modern physicians and apothecaries. Indeed, if the practice of medicine was more in such hands, it would be far more beneficial to mankind, than by making a trade of it.

“Even in our own country and our own times, not one hundredth part of the community have the advantage of *proper* medical assistance on the most trying emergencies. Besides the expence attending it, which is a serious consideration even



that the wig, the cane, and a knowledge of the dead languages, are not necessary to form the practical physician. They are also aware that it is highly necessary that

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to persons in moderate circumstances, and which puts it beyond the reach of the poor, there are many remote country situations where there is no properly educated practitioner within a distance perhaps of thirty miles. No medical man of a liberal mind will therefore condemn a work, that is calculated to diffuse such important instruction among the most enlightened class of the community; more especially as it also performs no small service even to professional men of skill and judgment; for it is the total ignorance of the people, that often makes the practice so irksome to men of scientific attainments. It is this which screens pretenders and impostors, and puts them on a level with men of real merit. This is most probably the true reason that invites such numbers to decry all attempts to inform the mass of mankind on the nature and treatment of diseases. The pretender shrinks from the scrutinizing eye of intelligence; he knows that the man of sense and knowledge will distinguish those who merit his confidence, will cheerfully resign himself to the guidance of honest and judicious practitioners, and calmly submit to the evils, which seem to form a part of our condition in this transitory state of our existence."

*Page ix. Preface to the 7th Edition of Reece's Medical Guide.*

a physician should be well versed in the different branches of the profession, to be entitled to their implicit confidence. Hence we find the physicians who have been principally educated in the school of Surgery and Pharmacy, carry nearly the whole practice of London; viz. Dr. Baillie, Dr. Babington, Sir Walter Farquhar, and Dr. Dick. It being a well-known fact, that Oxford and Cambridge are no longer schools for medicine, the physicians who have been solely educated at those universities, enjoy a very small proportion of the public confidence\*.

To a person possessing a very superficial knowledge of medicine, it must appear strange that the practice of physic should have been ever separated from surgery; he must naturally, on contemplating the

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\* Why do the clergy, and those gentlemen who have resided at Cambridge and Oxford, apply to the graduates of the Scotch universities in preference to those of their own universities when they require medical assistance? The answer is obvious.



subject, enquire why a surgeon should not be a good physician? With anatomy it is well known he is more conversant—that he is better acquainted with morbid structure, and has in general a better knowledge of pharmacy; why then not as capable of prescribing in all cases of disease as the *regular* physician?

A little reflection on the subject must convince him that the practitioner who has been educated in the schools of London, Edinburgh, or Dublin, whether he has a diploma or not, is more entitled to his confidence than the person who has led a life of dissipation at either of the English universities. The most ignorant must be sensible that a diploma cannot make a *clinical* physician, and hence we find the surgeons of London more consulted than the fellows of the College of Physicians.

CHAP. II.

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DR. Linacre having represented to Henry VIII. that “a multitude of unskilful and dishonest persons were practising medicine in the metropolis, to the great injury of the health of his subjects, (being most of them artificers, and so perfectly ignorant that few could read books”!) that monarch was induced to enact a law, that none should exercise the faculty of physic that were not found duly qualified by the Bishop of London, or Dean of St. Paul’s, a knowledge of the dead languages in those days of ignorance and barbarity being considered the only test of medical fitness. After the elapse of seven years, in consequence of the importunities of Dr. Lin-



acre, the king granted a charter to incorporate certain physicians in one body and perpetual fellowship, with the power of making statutes, and ordinances for the *wholesome* government and correction of the college, and of all persons practising physic within seven miles of London, “for the honor of his kingdom and the health of his subjects.” From the public and private character of Dr. Linacre, and his very liberal contributions towards the establishment of the institution, there can be no doubt but he was actuated by a sincere desire to enhance the dignity of his profession, and to benefit mankind, by improving the state of medicine, which he was sensible could not be at a lower ebb; and not to aggrandize a set of illiberal, captious, or ignorant men.

The original Bye Laws, framed under the immediate direction of this great man, were founded on the basis of liberality, and well calculated to excite in the profession a laudable spirit of emulation; or, as stated in the preamble, to promote “the honor of his country, and protect his ma-

jesty's subjects from the impositions of ignorant and designing men."—Although framed in those days of ignorance and barbarity, they afford a most striking contrast to the present Bye Laws of the college, which instead of being adapted to the state of medicine, are inimical to the progress of science, and injurious to the general interest of the country.

The members of the College of Physicians are divided into four classes, viz. Fellows, Licentiates, extra-Licentiates, and Licentiates in Midwifery! but the management of its internal concerns is exclusively claimed by the fellows, who are elected from the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge. The history of the college clearly proves that the fellowship originally included, and was intended to include, all *properly educated physicians*.

The Licentiates are not recognized as part of the society by the Fellows, although they style themselves members of the college\*, and are only "permitted to prac-

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\* The licentiate in quackery obtains his licence



tise so long as they behave themselves well!" This class was first added for the purpose of taking the lower practice, and was therefore *then* composed of men who were "altogether unfit to be admitted into the number of fellows, either because they were foreigners, or were not admitted doctors, or not sufficiently learned, or by reason of their too great youth (!) or such like cause: yet may notwithstanding be serviceable to the public, by taking care of the health of the king's subjects; at least in some particular diseases!"—The Licentiates were therefore originally what apothecaries are at the present time.

Since that period circumstances have so wonderfully changed, that of the two classes,

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from the stamp office, and is as much entitled to term himself a member of the stamp office as a licentiate of the college has, a member of the college. The college cannot interfere with his medicines, and he has as much right to prescribe them as any fellow of the college has the formulæ of their pharmacopœia, and no less intitled to a fee. The quack declares *regular* physicians to be a set of fee hunters!

the Licentiates are considered the best educated physicians ; for where, in the list of fellows, can we at any period find names to put in competition to those of Sydenham, Hunter, Fothergill, Babington, Garthshore, and Pearson.

The fellows have been occasionally involved in litigation, both with the licensed and unlicensed practitioners: in their contest with the licentiates, who have dared to claim their rights to the fellowship, they have not been able to advance one specious reason in behalf of their right of monopoly, but have uniformly had recourse to their Bye Laws, which the first legal authorities in this country have declared their charter does not authorize them to make\*.

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\* “ Is it not enough for the fellows of the college that, by virtue of a misconstruction of the legal extent of their monopoly, they have contrived to keep so many good things exclusively to themselves, without prohibiting the graduates of the Scotch universities, who do not chuse to be of their body as licentiates, from having a share of the bad ones ? To assume the power of at once refusing fellowship, and fulminating interdiction, against men,



Aware of the illiberality and inconsistency of their *Bye Laws*, the fellows have carefully concealed them. They are fully sensible that a publication of them would lessen them still more in the opinion of men of real science\*.

In consequence of this disgraceful secrecy, it often happens that candidates for a licence have been refused examination, because they had not strictly complied with their statutes, with the purport of which they had no means of being ac-

whose fitness they do not dispute, or dare not examine, seems a species of tyranny, altogether extraordinary in the cultivators of a liberal profession. Until the pretended rights of this body, however, are again regularly called in question, and solemnly decided on, individuals may, happily, frustrate their selfish views, by following a mixed practice as surgeons, or paying five pounds a month, the fine of practising as physicians, without the license of the college.—Nay, what seems truly whimsical, by descending to the *name* of apothecary, a man may freely practice in every department of medicine, bidding open defiance to the fulminations of the college.” DR. MACLEAN.

\* The College of Physicians is the only society in England that does not publish its statutes. J. J.

quainted. For the last hundred and fifty years the Bye Laws have been in an unsettled state; and latterly they have been drawn up with no small degree of caprice. We may however with truth say of them, which certainly cannot be said of the original bye-laws, that under them quackery has flourished, and genius and merit been proscribed; "In one word," observes a late writer\* in the Medical Review, "how have they sacrificed the best interest of their profession, *to gratify their thirst for aggrandisement and monopoly of power!*"

There being no superior honor attached to the fellowship, and the public making no distinction between the fellows and the licentiates, the latter have nothing to contend for, but a participation of the emoluments, which it seems they abandon, not because they could not establish their right, but because they are not worth the trouble of a contest†.

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\* Dr. Henderson.

† "Of the baneful effects of the monopoly I am now to speak. It is scarcely necessary to ad-



The college have seldom been involved in litigation with the unlicensed, or as they term them, *irregular* physicians, probably from a conviction that they have not the power to prevent their practising. Many respectable physicians have in consequence practised within their jurisdiction for many

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vert to what every one knows, that all monopolies, whatever they may be in their commencement, are, in the result of their progress, injurious to society. But an exclusive privilege in medicine, is a direct conspiracy against the lives of the community. What, however, is most surprising, in this case, is, that the monopoly now exercised by the College of Physicians in London, when strictly examined, will be found not to have been authorised, either by their original charter, or any acts of parliament relating to them; and that the most essential privileges which they claim are an absolute and complete usurpation, founded on their own bye-laws only, as if *their* bye-laws could supersede the law of the land. It is in virtue of their bye-laws only, for neither the charter nor acts of parliament confer the privilege, that they claim the right of refusing admission as Fellows to all who are not of the English universities. So, by a bye-law of the College of Physicians, all graduates of the universities of Scotland being refused admission to the fellowship, the act of union between the two countries, one of the fundamental laws of the land, is

years without molestation. Of late, a few junior physicians\* of the English universities, of scanty connection, and probably of contracted minds, having been elected censors, many bold resolutions have been proposed, and some carried into execution, with the view of extending their practice, for to no

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virtually superseded: for the universities, and all the bodies, respecting which no express stipulations had been entered into, were left on an equal footing in both countries, enjoying in common the privileges of British subjects. Express stipulations were made, for instance, respecting the members of both Houses of Parliament, &c. From all this, it follows, and if any part of it be not true, the College will contradict me, that graduates of the Scotch universities have an equal right, unless the bye-laws of the College can supersede a fundamental law of the land, to be admitted to the Fellowship with those of Oxford and Cambridge. Indeed, if reason or common sense had any thing to do in this business, and the examination of the College was any thing else than a farce, every man found to possess the *necessary qualifications* should be admitted, whatever university he graduated at, or whether he graduated at any university at all. It is most preposterous that the *mode or place of education* should be deemed to constitute any part of *medical fitness*." DR. MACLEAN.

\* A Dr. Roberts, (brother to the Solicitor of the College!) a Dr. Powell, &c.

other motive can we attribute their conduct ; they agreed to summon the unlicensed physicians ; to confine the practice of the surgeons to *manual operations*, and to prevent the apothecary from visiting and prescribing medicine.

The unlicensed physicians practising within the jurisdiction of the college were accordingly summoned, and for the purpose of degrading and mortifying this class the more, their names were associated with the advertisers of specifics. When the unlicensed physicians attended, agreeably to their summons, they were refused an examination, because they had not resided two years at an university !† They were desired not to style themselves Doctors on their doors, and to confine their practice either to surgery or pharmacy ! Some claimed a right to be examined, in consequence of their having granted licences to physicians who had the same honorary diploma, and who by their Bye Laws were equally unqualified\*. They were told, that since their ad-

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\* As Sir Walter Farquhar, and Dr. Babington.



mission the Bye Laws had been altered, and that their admission afforded no precedent!! Thus were those gentlemen disgraced, not because they were not qualified to practice, but because they had not gone through a ridiculous routine of keeping a few years at an university\*. Could any thing be more preposterous than to require men to go to school again, when they must be aware that they were as well qualified to practise as themselves, and indeed better than many of them, and especially after they had so long practised in London, with honor to themselves, and benefit to the public? Were they not more likely by their residence, to forget what they had already learnt by experience, than acquire any additional knowledge, by residing two years either at Cambridge, or Oxford†? Or were

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\* According to college doctrines, the immortal Hunter, to whom the profession is more indebted than to any other individual, was an 'irregular' man, which is only another term for quack!!

† The following observations on the English uni-

they not indeed better qualified to deliver lectures than any professor of medicine at either of the English universities?—A compliance with such a requisition must necessarily be highly detrimental to their characters, and their future practice. Such proceedings cannot but excite in the mind

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versities appear in a late number of the London Medical Review :

“ The graduates of Cambridge and Oxford choose their degrees just as young women choose their caps and bonnets : preferring what is genteel, without any regard to its utility or other intrinsic merits. A medical degree at Oxford or Cambridge, is inferior to one at Edinburgh, in the length of study, in the opportunities for acquiring knowledge, and in the severity of the examinations. If a man is entered upon the books at the English university two years before he goes to reside there, which is commonly, and may be universally the case, he is compelled only to spend the parts dedicated to study during three years, at the end of which time he receives the privilege of practising medicine, with the title of doctor. He cannot attain these privileges more speedily at Edinburgh. But the portion of the year dedicated to study at an English university, is considerably shorter than that at Edinburgh. At the former, each year contains three terms, and each of these terms comprises,

of every liberal man the liveliest sentiments of indignation. Would the legislature, on a proper representation being made to them, sanction such unphilosophical conduct, if not wanton cruelty?

Surely the fellows did not duly consider what advantage could possibly arise from

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at longest, less than six weeks; the three terms, therefore, of a year at Cambridge, make up together little more than four months; while the single long term, which at Edinburgh is called a session, fills up six months. In point of length of residence, therefore, an Edinburgh degree is superior to an English one. The meagre opportunities for acquiring medical knowledge in the English universities, and the paltry examinations with which the medical graduates purchase their honours, are so notorious, that we wonder the legislature, in its eagerness to reform the abuses of our profession, do not deprive Oxford and Cambridge of the power of giving medical degrees altogether. At Cambridge there is a professor of medicine, but he delivers no lectures, nor any other form of instruction: there is a professor of anatomy, who delivers a short course of lectures on comparative, not on human anatomy; there is an hospital, but none of the under graduates are allowed to enter it. With regard to the examinations, it is notorious that men who know nothing, and who never intend to



such proceedings. In the cool hour of reflection, when the ebullition of passion has ceased, can they have the presumption to assert that all this was done for the “honor of their country, and the health of his majesty’s subjects!” The very qualification they require evinces their ignorance of the capacity of the human mind. A man who has resided two years at an university, al-

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know any thing of medical science, offer themselves as candidates for medical degrees, or in the slang phraseology of the colleges, go out in medicine, simply for the purpose of gaining certain scholarships and fellowships which are given only to medical students.”

Hence it is evident, that the ‘irregular’ physician is the man of experience, and the regular has every thing to learn when he commences the practice!!

It is not a diploma that will make men practical physicians— a diploma at best is a gratification to weak minds. Many surgeons in this city possess it, and are really ashamed to allow it. In Germany and France, the practice of medicine is nearly in the hands of the surgeons—In this country, surgeons are at least as much consulted in medicine as physicians; and when the public mind is better informed on the subject, we doubt not that the surgeon will have the preference. J. J.

though no school for medicine, as Oxford or Cambridge, may be a candidate for a licence, while the person who has received his education in London, the first medical school in the known world, and although he has attended the practice of the first hospital in the kingdom a much longer period, is not considered qualified. Can any thing be more ridiculous? A few of the unlicensed, considering this bye law impolitic, and illegal, very properly refused to comply with it, and treated their interdiction with contempt; for nothing could certainly be more indecorous than to fulminate interdiction against men whose fitness they could not call in question. This is indeed a species of tyranny altogether extraordinary. As a proof that they had practised as physicians, prescriptions signed with their initials were produced by the president. Some asserted that they confined their practice to *medical surgery*; and as members of the College of Surgeons, contended that they had a right to prescribe in surgical cases. It was alleged that a surgeon had no right to put

his *initials* to the prescription, but that he might write his name in full!—Ridiculous distinctions! It is required by law that a physician should put his initials to his prescription, in order that he may be responsible for its consequences; and we assert, on the first legal authority in this kingdom, that a surgeon or apothecary has as much right to put his initials to his prescription, as a fellow or licentiate of the college.

When the quacks appeared before them, they were told they had no intention to interfere with their medicines, but only required that they should not style themselves Doctors, on their doors;—as much as to say, encroach not on *our* privileges, and we care not how much you injure the apothecary, or impose on the public\*!

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\* The inundation of quackery, which is sweeping away the inhabitants of this country with fearful strides, if my allegations be just, is principally to be attributed to the joint influence of positive medical ignorance, and the restrictive effects of medical monopoly. Of the deficiency of medical science, or ignorance of principles, I have already



spoken; that is, as being latent, presuming on their non-existence. The president, I presume, will admit it as a fair mode of reasoning: *de quibus non apparentibus, et de quibus non existentibus eadem est ratio*. If he will produce them, I shall be most happy to be undeceived, and will cheerfully acknowledge my error.

## CHAP. III.

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THERE is no virtue so truly great and god-like as justice. To be perfectly just is an attribute in the divine nature ; to be so to the utmost of our abilities must be the glory and pride of every honest man. The intention of the legislature in renewing the charter to the College of Physicians, was avowedly, the *suppression of quackery and encouragement of genius* ; and in the framing of their bye-laws, these objects the college should have kept in view. Government allow no inferior tribunal to make statutes injurious to the interest of the community, and the country expects that their conduct in the execution of their laws be *fair, candid, and unprejudiced*, not *arbi-*

*trary, capricious, or biassed, much less warped by resentment, or personal dislike. In exercising their trust they should discard party, friendship, and kindred. Justice is always represented as blind, that we may suppose her thoughts wholly intent on the equity of the cause, without being diverted or prejudiced by objects foreign to it. Such is the superior excellency of the British constitution, that in the inferior tribunals, justice is administered with impartiality, and an act of injustice is rarely suffered to pass with impunity; and when a Court loses its regard for justice; when it no longer considers it as something venerable, holy, and inviolable, we may pronounce that in this land of liberty such a power must necessarily be hastening to its ruin.*

So long as the source of admission into the college of physicians was pure, the institution flourished and was highly beneficial to the country. Abilities were distinguished, quackery suppressed, and the faculty laudably united for the public good. In the last chapter we pointed out the im-



policy and absurdity of the present bye-laws of the College; we shall now proceed to consider whether in the execution of these bye-laws, they have evinced that regard for justice and impartiality which their country has an undoubted right to expect from them.

Several Physicians of unquestionable abilities, were compelled to leave their practice and go to Scotland for the period of two years, in order to prove residence and entitle them to an examination; while Dr. Babington and Sir Walter Farquhar were admitted licentiates, although they were in no respect more eligible! and for no other apparent reason but because they were so fortunate as to possess a *suffrage of party*! As physicians they were in no respect inferior to them, nor had they any thing to learn by a residence at an university. A physician who had practised in London some years relinquished an appointment to a public dispensary, which was afterwards

held by an unlicensed physician\* without interruption, or even a dread of interdiction, because forsooth He, like sir Walter Farquhar, and Dr. Babington, had friends in the college!! They have lately granted him a license without passing through the academic forms they required of the others!! Such barefaced partiality and injustice reflect disgrace on the college, and cannot but excite in the mind of every liberal man sentiments of contempt and disgust. If the legislature were properly acquainted with these unjust proceedings, such an odious state of things would surely be of short duration. Some explanation we conceive to be absolutely necessary; and we trust the period is not far distant when it will be demanded.

Another instance of their apparent partiality is evinced in their conduct towards Dr. T——n. They agreed to permit this gentleman to continue his practice for a

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\* Dr. Adams.

limited period ; now had they acted as guardians of the public health, they would certainly have examined him as to his fitness before they granted him such an indulgence. In the course of that period Dr. T——n promised to qualify himself by residence at an university, for examination!! Although the time has long elapsed, he still continues to practise as a physician within the limits of their jurisdiction ! It is worthy of notice, that soon after Dr. Adams became an editor of the *Physical and Medical Journal*, although ineligible by their bye-laws, he was made a licentiate of the college, because they were afraid of their conduct being exposed in that work ;—and Dr. T——n, after dedicating to them in the most fulsome terms of adulation his ridiculous defence of cow-pox, it is said, is no longer apprehensive of interdiction !

The licentiate in midwifery has only the privilege to prescribe in puerperal or infantile diseases, so that if any of the family happen to be indisposed at the time of his attendance, a licensed physician must be



sent for!! Are we by this injunction to suppose that the lives of lying-in-women and infants are of little value to the community, or that the treatment of their diseases requires but little skill?

It is truly ridiculous for the college to presume to grant licences to gentlemen to practise a branch of the profession, of which they do not pretend to have any knowledge. —The examination of such candidates, if any be necessary, must be truly farcical. The examination of candidates for a licence to practise midwifery within the jurisdiction of the college, is not less arrogant, than assuming to themselves the right of examining into the qualifications of graduates, who have already undergone the discipline, and given the required tests of competency at the most respectable universities. Such an assumption is not only indecent, but a palpable infringement of the rights of the Scotch universities, since it diminishes their privileges\*.

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\* A graduate of the university of Edinburgh,

According to the present bye-laws, a young man who has resided *two years* at the university, where he graduated, without the smallest professional experience, can solicit and obtain a licence, which a man of the most approved abilities, learning, and skill, is not permitted to obtain, because, forsooth, he has not enjoyed the *benefit* of an academical residence. Too often this

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who for some time had been demonstrator of anatomy, and private pupil to the celebrated Dr. Monroe of Edinburgh, has lately been rejected by the London College, as incompetent to the practice of medicine. He had presumed to offer himself a candidate for the appointment of physician to the Westminster Hospital, in opposition to a member of the college, prior to his examination. It is not only ridiculous, but highly indecorous that the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge should assume to themselves a right of examining into the qualifications of their graduates, who have already undergone the discipline, and given the required tests of competency. Such an assumption of power is a palpable infringement on their rights, by diminishing their privileges. Can arrogance be carried to a greater height? or, is it to be supposed, that the legislature ever intended to sanction such arbitrary proceedings?

qualifying residence with young students at the English universities, is the scene of dissipation and profligacy, rather than the seat of observation and study.

Had the College not limited the period of study, it would have shewn a better acquaintance with the capacity of the human mind. They should know that one person will learn as much in one year, as others will in twelve.

So short a period as two years, surely, cannot be suitable for rendering a student capable of entering on the successful exercise of so important an employment as medicine, a period not half the length of what is assigned to a mechanical occupation. If any restriction be necessary, it should have been an ample one, or none at all. That the *mode or place* of education should constitute any part of medical fitness, is also truly preposterous. On this point Lord Mansfield has delivered his opinion—"That the college are *obliged*, in conformity to the trust and confidence placed in them, to *admit all* that are *fit*, and to reject *all* that are *unfit*.



“ I think (observes his lordship) that every person of proper education and requisite learning or skill, and possessed of all other due qualifications, is entitled to a licence, and *he ought*, if he desires it, to be admitted into the college. The public has a right to his services, and that not only as a physician but as a censor\*.”

If they really had the public good, and the honor of the profession at heart, a strict examination touching the merits of the individual as a candidate, would be the only test they would look for†. They would not enquire whether he graduated at an university or not. So *deeply* learned are those collegiate gentlemen, that it is difficult to say what their real object is, and we doubt much whether they know it themselves.—

\* Can any thing be more reasonable than this opinion?—If the college were actuated by any other motives than the encouragement of genius, and the benefit of their country, would they oppose it?

† Were they men of science, would they require any other?

Such of them that deliver lectures on the practice of physic in London, declare in their introductory lectures, that London is the first school in the world for acquiring medical knowledge!! and when in their official capacity of censors at the college, they sneer at such an education, and lay it down as an invariable maxim, that a man cannot be qualified to practise as a physician, that has not resided two years at an university!! Thus, it appears, they are contending for the benefit of the universities, to the manifest injury of the London hospitals; for if a pupil by two years residence at Edinburgh, Dublin, or Glasgow, is qualified to become a candidate for a licence to practise physic in London, it is an encouragement for young men to attend those schools in preference to those of London, particularly as they may obtain their education at a much cheaper rate there, and it cannot be denied that the lecturers on surgery and anatomy are less eminent than those of London.

When Dr. Willis was called in to his

majesty, his ministers did not think it necessary to enquire whether he was a licentiate of the college, and we do not find that his physicians dared refuse to meet him in consultation, because he was an *irregular* physician; nor does it appear, that the East India Company (which in point of influence and suffrage ranks next to government), pay any attention to the college doctrines, for they have lately given two lucrative and honorable appointments within the jurisdiction of the college, to physicians who are not of their body; indeed, it is said, that one was appointed in direct opposition to the college. The Directors of the East India Company are too enlightened to be biassed by such absurdities. They look to the abilities of the physician, to discharge the duties of the office, and so as he be properly qualified, it is of no consequence to them whether he was educated in the east, the west, the north, or the south. From these lessons, if the college possessed common sense, they would draw an instructive inference.



As the college was instituted for the benefit of medicine, and the health of his majesty's subjects, it is somewhat surprising that the legislature should have confined its salutary influence to London, and its environs.—The lives of the people in the country are surely no less valuable. The case is, that in those days of superstition and ignorance, country practice was not worth monopolising. The consequence now is, that regular medicine in the country is upon the whole more ably conducted than in town ; at least most of our modern improvements have originated from that source.

The examination of candidates is to be conducted in the Latin language ;—at the time this law was enacted, the physicians were well grounded in the Latin tongue. It was then a medium language, and by it, they were enabled to correspond with the learned of all countries. It is now no longer so, and even at the English universities, the use of it is considered pedantic, and a proof of ignorance. It is said, that a man

should be able to read the writings of the antients in their original language; if this be the reason, a knowledge of the Greek, the Sanscrit, the Hebrew and Celtic, must be equally necessary. But are not all the works of the antients that are worth reading, translated into the English language? This restriction argues very little acquaintance with the history of medicine; for stationary as its progress has been, the practice of Hippocrates, or Celsus, affords no rule of conduct at the present day. So far as they go, it is proper to be acquainted with them, but by no means, to make their language and phraseology the medium of conveying modern information. Look to the discoveries of the surgeon in anatomy, and the chemist in his department since that period. Has not chemistry been almost a new creation? Has the language either of Greece, or Rome, provided a dress for conveying the modern ideas on this subject? On the absurdity of an examination in a dead language, a late writer very justly observes, “every *rational* man will

be apt to consider so preposterous a test of *medical fitness*, as a very *fit* cloak for medical ignorance, and it cannot be considered in any other point of view. But the fact is, that the mummary of an examination in any dead, or foreign language at this time of day, is worthy of being considered not simply a proof of ignorance in a particular department; but of great perverseness and folly, when it is not the result of evil design." It is to be hoped, that every medical man has made himself acquainted with the Greek, and Latin languages, previous to his entering on the study of medicine; but during the period necessary to render him conversant in the different branches of the profession, if his mind has been properly engaged in it, it is not to be expected that he should retain such a knowledge of them, as to enable him to comprehend fully or answer minutely and satisfactorily the questions of the examiner. Indeed to keep up his knowledge of the Latin language, it is necessary that the lectures should be delivered in it. It is, we



conceive, incumbent on the college to assign some better reason for continuing this apparent farce of examining in a language, in which neither themselves, nor the candidates can be supposed to be able to explain with fluency and accuracy the opinions they entertain. Besides, we presume when a candidate does not answer their questions to their satisfaction, it is impossible for them to determine, whether it be in consequence of his ignorance of the language, or of the subject on which he is examined. We advise them to follow the example which has been long set them by the American physicians, and lately by the Portuguese, of examining medical candidates in their vernacular tongue, which at any rate is the most rational\*.

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\* The gentlemen who were compelled to reside at a university to entitle them to an examination, instead of attending lectures on physic, &c. devoted their time principally to acquiring a knowledge of the Latin tongue, to enable them to comprehend and answer the questions of the college!!! Of all acquirements, sure the knowledge of the dead languages is the most useless. Language is

The college finding the improving state of surgery to be gradually encroaching on their province, and that the public is disposed to think more favourably of their *medical* abilities than of the *regular* physician, adopted the very extraordinary resolution to forbid their prescribing even in surgical cases ; and thus lay claim to medical surgery, although cultivated by the industry and attention of the surgeon ! It was proposed to summon Mr. Cline, Mr. A. Cooper, Mr. Home, and other eminent surgeons ; but reflection it seems has so far damped their courage, that it is said they are no longer inclined to venture on an experiment which would most likely endanger their charter !—It is however said, that they have forbidden their members to

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a vehicle for our ideas, and it is more commendable first to learn a few ideas to convey than different vehicles for communicating them—but why the *dead* languages in preference to the living ? The grammatical Latin prescriptions of many of the members of the college prove what kind of examination they passed !

meet a surgeon in consultation in medical cases! There is we believe no instance on record of the College of Physicians having before attempted to limit the practice of the surgeon. The surgeon having from time immemorial, been in the habit of prescribing in surgical cases without any interruption, or insolent interference of the physician, may proudly bid defiance to college interdiction. The surgeon is in possession of the field, and as the public mind becomes better acquainted with the subject, and with the nature of an academical education, he will no doubt be supported in the defence of his rights. The school of surgery is the only proper school for medicine; and we conceive in the present improved state of surgery, it is not possible to draw a line of demarcation that each may know his respective province. Primitive medicine was chiefly chirurgical, and why physic and surgery should be separate, we can discover no plausible reason. The disunion at any rate is oppressive to the public, for few people can



afford to pay for the attendance of the physician, the surgeon, and the apothecary. If medical surgery be not the province of the surgeon, a constitutional ulcer, however trifling, would be a ruinous misfortune to a person of confined circumstances\*. On this subject we shall quote the opinion of that able and experienced surgeon, Mr. Pearson.

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\* Medical surgery having been cultivated by the surgeon, there can be no doubt but that it belongs to his province. If so, it must be very difficult to separate the practice, that each may know his department. External inflammation is claimed by the surgeon, and internal by the physician—organic diseases are unquestionably the province of the surgeon, and also constitutional affections that are sympathetic of morbid structure or local injury. Indigestion, when the consequence of organic disease of the stomach, fevers, whether from injuries or the disease of the viscera, belong to the surgeon. The physician contends, that the medical treatment of surgical cases belongs to him; now as a physician cannot distinguish a cancerous ulcer from a venereal or a scrophulous one, how can he possibly know what remedies may be necessary to correct the diathesis of the constitution? The following case, published in the volume of the Selection of Medical and Surgical Cases, shows the folly

“ Surgery (observes this esteemed author) hath commonly been defined the art of curing diseases by external remedies, or manual operation ; and hence many people have imagined, that when a man has learned the art of dressing sores, of applying bandages, and performing operations with a little dexterity, that he must necessarily be an accomplished surgeon. If a

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of physicians interfering with the practice of surgery.

“ In July last, a lady of considerable fortune came to London, to consult a *regular* physician. To the person with whom she lodged, she expressed a wish to take the opinion of the king’s, or queen’s physician, supposing that they must be the most fashionable, as well as skilful. A pompous physician of the *regular* tribe was accordingly sent for. She complained of having suffered much by head-ach for some months, and that her health had latterly declined. The learned physician gravely declared that her complaints were “ nervous, and bilious” !! of which she had before expressed a suspicion. He assured her that the medicine he should prescribe for her, (decoction of bark, sulphuric acid, and extract of hemlock) would restore her to health. After giving a few directions as to diet, he most gracefully introduced a

conclusion so *gross* and *fallacious* had been confined to the *vulgar* and *illiterate*, the progress of *scientific* surgery would have suffered little interruption ; but if young minds are directed to these objects, as the *only* important matters upon which their faculties are to be exercised ; if the gross informations of sense constitute the sum of their knowledge, little more can be ex-

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fee of two guineas into his pocket, and wished her a good morning. On his second visit, she told him that she had a very troublesome small ulcer on the leg. He refused to look at it, because it was not within his province, but advised her to show it to Mr. Cline. The following morning she went to Mr. Cline, who after examining it, prescribed a lotion, and some alterative pills. The pills being taken with the physician's medicine, operated violently on the bowels. The physician being made acquainted with this effect, on his next visit, expressed his astonishment ; declared it could not be produced by his medicine, and that the diarrhæa was evidently of a critical nature. He ordered her to take a draught of rhubarb, magnesia, and pepper-mint water. This increased the purging ; and after taking one of the pills in the evening, she was violently attacked with cholera morbus, in consequence of which, I



pected from such a mode of study, than servile imitation, or daring empiricism. Indeed, some people have affected to oppose surgery as an art, to medicine as a science ; and if their pretensions were justly founded, the former would certainly be degraded to a mere mechanical occupation. But it is not very easy to comprehend the grounds of such a distinction. The *internal* and *external* parts of the body, are governed

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was requested to see her without delay. The prescriptions satisfactorily accounted for her sufferings. I ordered an anodyne draught, which allayed the vomiting, and quieted the bowels. The next day I pointed out to her the absurdity of taking the medicines of two practitioners. By the use of tonic medicines, and a continuance of Mr. Cline's pills and lotion, the ulcer was healed, and she was soon restored to health."

The College of Physicians say that a surgeon has no right to take a fee for his prescription ; a fee is a mere donation, and neither the physician or surgeon can enforce the payment of a fee if the patient do not offer it. But surely a man is at liberty to consult the practitioner of whose abilities he entertains the best opinion, more particularly as the beneficial effect of medicine in a great measure depends on the confidence the patient has in the medical attendant.

by the same general laws, during a state of health ; and if an *internal* part be attacked with inflammation, the appearances and effects will bear a great similarity to the same disease situated *externally* ; nor are the indications of cure, in general, materially different. If by science, therefore, be meant, “ a knowledge of the laws of nature,” he who knows what is known of the order and method of nature in the production, progress, and termination of surgical diseases, merits as justly the title of a *scientific practitioner*, as the *well-educated physician*. The practical parts of physic and surgery are very frequently disunited, but their theory and principles are indivisible, since they truly constitute *one* and the *same* science. But although the science of physic and surgery *cannot* properly be separated, yet, in the application of rules and principles to the knowledge and cure of chirurgical diseases, an extensive acquaintance with the *theory* of medicine will by no means be sufficient for practical purposes : lax and general notions

floating in the understanding<sup>r</sup> can be of little advantage, until they are reduced to something limited and specific; and except knowledge be in the detail, the application of it in particular instances will be attended with almost insurmountable difficulties. He, therefore, who desires to practise surgery with *probity* and *success*, must study it both as a science and as an art; for a man destitute of principles, is little better than a surgical automaton; while the man of mere erudition can only be considered as a learned spectator.

“ This is certain, that he who reduces the province of the surgeon to the performance of operations, and consequently directs his attention in a transient and careless manner to the less splendid parts of his profession, may learn the *art* of *mutilating* his fellow creatures with ease and dexterity, but will never deserve to be treated as a good surgeon. “ The study of chirurgical diseases which may, and which ought to be cured without having recourse to operations, should at all times be considered as



the principal subject of a surgeon's attention." It is to be lamented that the theory of medicine is still in a limited and imperfect state. Even studious and thinking men, seem to bestow more pains to become *rich*, than to generalize facts, and reduce them to scientific principles. But, indeed, until we have "*A true and active natural philosophy upon which the science of medicine can be built,*" there is little solid ground to hope for a theory that would deserve to outlive its inventor.

"We are not to expect to see these deficiencies supplied, and the fabric of true chirurgical science erected, by the particular labours of separate individuals, much less by the powers of a single arm; there must be a combination of *learned* men, who will act in *concert* under prescribed laws; and by the conjunction of their labours, it is probable, that such discoveries and improvements might be effected, as we have scarcely yet learnt how to wish for."

Even medicine itself has derived what little improvement it has received from the

application and industry of the surgeon—The late work of Mr. Abernethy on the chylopoietic functions, affords instruction equally useful to the physician, as to the surgeon—The *regular* physician, regarding no discovery that does not originate with himself, has observed on Mr. Abernethy's work, that he has travelled out of his province in treating on subjects of *medical reasoning!!* We would wish to know in what the superiority of the power of reasoning peculiar to the physician consists? It is to be lamented, that the love of lucre should mislead men into such culpable and dishonest conduct. We are intended by providence to be connected with one another in society—better then discard all sordid and selfish views, and be united for the improvement of medicine and the real benefit of mankind. By friendly intercourse our capacities are enlarged, our virtuous affections called forth in proper exercise, and our lives rendered more comfortable. In order to confirm our mutual connection, let the desire of improving our

art pervade the different members of the profession, and let us endeavour to merit the esteem, and delight in the good opinion of each other.—For the want of such a propensity, selfish principles have unfortunately partially occupied its place. Instead of mutual attraction, a repulsive power has prevailed—Among men who have no regard to the approbation of one another, all intercourse cannot be otherwise than jarring and offensive.



## CHAP. IV.



THE College of Physicians are empowered by their charter to make bye laws for the regulation of the practice of physic in London; but it is ridiculous to suppose, that those bye laws are to supersede the laws of the land, or that the College would be supported by the legislature, in the enforcement of an impolitic or bad bye law. The College of Physicians are as responsible for their conduct as any other society; and if they abuse the power with which they are invested, either by acts of injustice, the enactment of statutes inimical to the interest of their country, or flagrant neglect of duty, it is then incumbent on us to represent the same to the legislature, and

to demand their interference.—We shall continue to expose that part of their conduct which we conceive to be reprehensible and impolitic, and in so doing, we are happy to find that we are supported by the first medical characters in this country. As we assert nothing but facts, we condemn their threats of prosecution. Instead of taking counsel's opinion on points, the truth of which they cannot deny, we advise them to consider the best defence they can make of their late conduct, as the time is not far distant, when they will probably be called upon to do it.

The College being aware that they have not the power of enforcing a bad bye law, or to exclude any member of the profession from the practice of physic in London, *that is duly qualified*, (whether a physician with an honorary diploma, a surgeon, or apothecary,) they have lately made a law, subjecting any fellow or licentiate to a penalty of five pounds, who shall so far degrade himself, as to meet an unlicensed practitioner within the limits of their

jurisdiction!! Now, as those unlicenced practitioners are as competent to the practice of physic as themselves, surely they cannot say that this is done for “the *honor* of the kingdom, or the *benefit* of his Majesty’s subjects!” The object of such a resolution is too evident to admit of a doubt—we shall see whether the licentiates will comply with it. Had the College been actuated by a desire to benefit their country, they surely would have first ascertained whether those unlicenced practitioners were, as the charter states, “ignorant or designing men.” If they doubt their abilities, why not examine them? particularly as they have evinced a desire to that effect. To refuse a practitioner an examination, because he has not resided two years at an university, is truly preposterous. How very different has been the conduct of the surgeons in London towards the physicians. Whenever a patient expresses a wish to his surgeon, to have the attendance of a physician, he never refuses his consent, but, on the contrary, recommends it; and even in



surgical cases, where the health of the patient has materially suffered, the surgeon is generally the first to propose it—not that he absolutely stands in need of such assistance, but because he has no objection to meet a physician. To this liberal conduct of the surgeon are they much indebted for the confidence the public at present place in them.—To say that the physician possesses a more perfect knowledge of diseases, and can treat them more successfully than the surgeon or apothecary, is really to insult common sense. When the college charter was granted, surgery was at a very low ebb, and the practitioners were far from being respectable.—Indeed, Henry VIII. who granted the charter to the College of Physicians was the first who rescued this useful profession from the disgrace of being united with barbers.—Since that period times are wonderfully changed.—Of the two characters, the surgeon is justly esteemed the most respectable. Indeed there is not to be found a more valuable member of the community, than the

surgeon. In surgery there is something like science.—The practitioner pursues his studies with satisfaction to himself, and his mind is almost perpetually engaged in improving his art for the benefit of mankind.—Now, what is physic? Is there any thing in it like science? the very basis of it is hypothesis\*. With respect to the nature of diseases, and the *modus operandi* of medicines, are we not as much in the dark as in the time of Hippocrates? Will the physician acquainted with the history of physic, say, that any important discovery in medicine has been made since that period? Or to come to the point, are the physicians of the present day more successful in the cure of diseases than they were two thousand years ago? We have heard lately, of the “vast improvements in medicine,” but we are totally at a loss to conjecture in what they consist. Nay, can the physician deny, that

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\* If the legislature entertained any other opinion of medicine would they have protected or sanctioned quackery?

with all his boasted superior knowledge of diseases, the nurse, who has been in the habit of attending invalids, is not often more successful in the treatment of diseases than himself? The author of these remarks having been in the habit of attending patients with physicians and surgeons upwards of sixteen years (during six years of which he had the care of a provincial hospital) has had the opportunity of forming an estimate of the abilities of the physician and surgeon, and from the experience he has had, he has no hesitation in declaring, that was he afflicted even with fever, which the physician considers more particularly his province, he would more willingly submit to the directions of an experienced surgeon or apothecary than a *regular*\* physician.

The college supposing that the apothecaries of London were encroaching on their

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\* By the term *regular*, the writer means those physicians, who have received their education at an English university, and not the graduates of Dublin, or the Scotch universities.



privileges by attending patients, discussed the propriety of obliging them to confine their practice to pharmacy! Being, however, doubtful, whether they really possessed the power of doing it, and sensible, that the apothecaries would not have tamely submitted to such a tyrannical mandate, it is said they had the wise precaution, to take legal opinion; for had they taken compulsory means, and not succeeded, they were well aware, they would for ever have forfeited the support of this respectable branch of the profession. The opinion of the learned barrister, we are informed, was, “That the apothecaries had established by custom, their right to attend patients, and prescribe for them!!” They have consequently abandoned the experiment, as too hazardous. Licences were formerly granted to such apothecaries as were found competent to the practice of physic; and in order to render them eligible, an university education was not deemed necessary. Indeed, the first on the present list of licentiates, is not a doctor of physic, and why

they should now grant licences only to medical doctors, and exclude apothecaries, is best known to themselves.—The probable reason is, that were they to admit apothecaries, the graduates of the Scotch universities would not be satisfied with a licence which only placed them on an equality with the apothecary. The Scotch graduates would therefore insist on their right of being admitted to the fellowship. The apothecary having established by custom his right to attend patients, it is absolutely necessary that he should be examined as to his competency. Not one half the apothecaries of London have a proper education, and although not able to discriminate one disease from another, yet his whole time is devoted to visiting patients, while the composition of the medicine is left to a careless young man, who is as ignorant of drugs as his master is of diseases, and who in the absence of his master will employ the errand boy to compound the medicines.—More lives are sacrificed by the carelessness of

assistants and ignorance of apothecaries, than are even prolonged by medicine, much more restored to health. Nay, as the practice of medicine is now conducted in this country by regular men and quacks, twenty lives are destroyed to one that is prolonged a month. Such is the great benefit this country derives from medicine! If this be a fact, and no medical man of experience and observation can deny it, will the legislature not allow that a medical reform is absolutely necessary!!

The following extract from the statutes of the college is an evident proof that the licences were originally granted, chiefly if not entirely to apothecaries.

“ Because very many in this city exercise physic, whom we think altogether unfit to be admitted into the number of fellows, either because they are foreigners, or *are not admitted doctors*, or are not sufficiently learned, or by reason of their too great youth (!) or such like causes, (!) yet may notwithstanding be serviceable to the public in taking care of the health of the king’s



subjects, at least in some *particular* diseases: concerning these we do ordain and appoint, that after due examination and approbation of the president and censors, they be permitted to practise so long as they *behave themselves well!*"

What say the present permissives to this reason, for granting licences, and excluding them from the fellowship!!! A late commentator on the laws of the college, observes,

" By reserving the test of an examination in their own hand, no candidate can be admitted a licentiate, who is not competent to the exercise of his profession. This restriction of residence at an university, was indeed opening a door for young men new from the school, versed solely in academic lore; but it was shutting it against a *more deserving class*, that would have done the college more credit by their admission into it. I mean those practitioners who after thirty years meritorious application to the exercise of the different departments of the profession, and having gained

public approbation, wish for an honorary degree, to lessen their toils, and to confine their practice to the office of the physician. This degree being the passport to obtain a licence from the college, the restriction of residence at an university prevents the admission of it."

Another late writer remarks, "there are many apothecaries worthy the highest honors in medicine, and it may be considered fortunate in the present degraded state of the profession in the metropolis, that men of talents, education, and integrity should enter the list. When such men have for years borne the fatigue of business, it is hard indeed if he may not be allowed to exercise his talents in the *highest* departments of the profession."

A knowledge of diseases is only to be obtained at the bed side of a patient. It is experience that makes the physician, and in this respect many apothecaries have a decided advantage over the graduates of Oxford and Cambridge. The apothecary is also better versed in pharmacy, and

generally as well acquainted with anatomy ; why not then a better practitioner? Is a superior knowledge conveyed by a diploma? or are the intellects strengthened by breathing university air, or leading a life of dissipation? Suppose the apothecaries of London were unanimously to agree not to call in a fellow of the college, till this illiberal by-law be abrogated? If the college by their charter possessed the power of prohibiting the apothecary from attending patients, there can be little doubt but that the censors would put it into execution ; in that case would they have sent their prescriptions to them or to the chemists\*? The

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\* A late writer observes, it is not unusual for young physicians, on commencing practice in London, to enter into an engagement with apothecaries and chemists, to send their prescriptions to them, on the condition of their recommending them when a physician is required. When those physicians are called in to a patient by the apothecary, they are under the necessity of considering his interest in prescribing medicine. Thus, although the case of the patient may require little medicine, he will be ordered to take a draught every two or three hours, besides powders and pills. Such a dis-



apothecary being deprived of the power of recommending physicians, could no longer expect any favors from them, and thus would they in a great measure be deprived of the means of procuring a livelihood. From this class have emanated as eminent physicians as any that have been graduates at the English universities. Indeed, to this department did not many of the present licentiates belong? and have not the public a better opinion of them on that account? When we say that Sir Lucas Pepys, and many members of the college were originally apothecaries, we conceive we are paying them a compliment. It is at any rate more creditable to them, than to say that they had only studied medicine *two* years when they obtained their licences, which may be said of some *regular* physicians in London!!

The apothecary is generally the first that

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graceful practice is indeed making merchandise of the distressed, and from a most dishonest principle, tampering with the lives of the friends, who place in them the most implicit confidence.

is consulted, and upon his report depends the decision of the patient or his friends, whether a physician be called in or not.—He has no objection to the attendance of a physician, because he is aware, that in prescribing medicines he will not lose sight of his interest\*, and that he can send in the draughts, pills, and powders, with a better grace—besides, it relieves his mind from the responsibility of the case.—For these reasons the apothecary recommends a physician, which gives the public an idea, that the physician is a more skilful practitioner. The physician receives his fee, while the apothecary considers himself fortunate if his bill be paid in two years ; and it frequently happens, that the physician is the

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\* An apothecary is not pleased with the practice of a physician if he does not order his patient to take ten shillings worth of medicine in the course of the day. How many a patient is compelled to swallow a draught of a nauseous medicine, merely for the sake of amusing his mind, when the same quantity of beef tea might have proved far more beneficial, and probably have saved his life !

only person paid, particularly when the patient does not recover.

The College have therefore no just reason to complain of the encroachment of apothecaries. Indeed, if the physician was a liberal man, he would in such cases divide the fee with the apothecary ; and were the writer an apothecary in London, he would not call in a physician, if he really did not stand in need of his assistance, unless he would agree to allow a moiety of the fee : How many physicians are there in London, who would be happy to make such a contract with apothecaries ?

In all cases it is generally at the option of the apothecary whether he chooses to call in the assistance of a physician or a surgeon. If the surgeons who do not practise pharmacy, were to prescribe draughts, pills, and boluses, they would be more frequently called in by the apothecary, than they are ; and our opinion is, that were they more consulted, we should hear less of organic diseases and their fatal consequences. The apothecaries in London are not so well paid



for their trouble as a licensed porter. He is obliged to keep up an expensive establishment, and very few indeed are those who can well afford it.—In the country, the apothecary makes a charge for attendance ; and when an apothecary in London succeeds in recovering his patient without putting him to the expence of a physician, he is equally entitled to make an extra charge for attendance. Since the fellows of the College have learnt that they have not the power to prevent the apothecaries residing within their jurisdiction, from attending patients, it is said, that they have behaved more *squeezingly* polite to them.—College physicians are “deeply learnt,” and we believe no set of men study their own interest more ; but when a physician prescribes for a private patient (not recommended by an apothecary) does he then consider the interest of the apothecary, or does he not recommend the patient to procure the medicines at the shop of a chemist? Every gentleman that enters the profession as an apothecary, should look forward to the highest honors

in medicine. This prospect acts as a powerful incentive to his future exertions, and if he be deprived of it, his genius will be repressed, and thus is a barrier thrown in the way of medical improvement.—Fortunately, beyond the seven mile post, this restrictive influence does not extend. The country apothecary, after bearing the fatigue of practice many years, may procure an honorary diploma, and practise as a physician, while the London apothecary must remain stationary for the whole course of his life.

The most important duty imposed on the college by their charter, and which a late writer declares to be the fundamental condition on which it was granted, is expressed in the following words:—“ That four persons of the best learned, wisest, and most discreet, shall be annually chosen and elected ; and after being chosen and elected, and having a corporal oath administered to them, they shall have full authority and power to search the house of every person carrying on the mystery or craft of apothecary.

cary, in order to judge of the drugs and stuff, whether defective, corrupted, and not meet nor convenient to be ministered in any medicines for the health of man's body ; and that if these persons, after the oath to them so administered, do obstinately refuse to make the said search, and view *once* in the year, then, for such default, each of these persons shall forfeit forty shillings."

The principal, if not only benefit the country could derive from the charter, is the inspection of drugs, and suppression of quackery.—If drugs have any effect, it is surely of the first consequence, that they be administered pure and genuine.—Now this most essential part of their duty they have most shamefully neglected\*, and why? The answer is but too clear!

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\* This is a most serious charge against the college.—To such a pitch is the adulteration of drugs now carried on, that I will undertake to prove that there is scarcely a shop in London, that is stocked with genuine drugs. That there are a few conscientious chemists in London, I do not deny; indeed it is only justice to say, the drugs and chemical preparations procured from Allen and Howard of Plough Court, Reece and Co. of



Through this culpable neglect, the preparers of medicines in London, for the use of apothecaries, are not under the least apprehension of having their articles examined.—Hence adulteration has been, and still is, carried on to a most alarming extent, with impunity.—Indeed, there is scarcely a shop to be found in London, entirely furnished with genuine drugs, and pharmaceutical preparations made according to the formulæ of the London Pharmacopœia! Is there a druggist in London, that has not his private pharmacopœia? Is there a drug-grinder in London, who is not deeply skilled in the art of adulteration?

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Henrietta Street, and Corbyn and Co. of Holborn, I have always found very good.

If a physician had the interest of his patient or his own reputation at heart, he would examine the medicine before his patient took it. Unfortunately the physicians, particularly those of Cambridge and Oxford, are so ignorant of pharmacy that they do not know one drug from another. With such nicety are prescriptions compounded in London, that if one prescription be made up at thirty shops, the medicine shall be different, either in consequence of the substitution of one drug for another, the use of adulterated drugs, or some mistake!!

Are not articles in powder sold at one fourth the price they are in substance? Examine the vegetable extracts—instead of containing the virtues of the articles in a concentrated state, may they not be given to the same extent as the articles from whence they are prepared? Are the essential oils perfectly genuine? Are the etherial and volatile spirits of a proper strength? And are there not powders sold under the name of drugs of which they do not contain one grain? These are facts of which the college cannot plead ignorance. If medicine be the gift of heaven to mitigate or cure the diseases that assail human nature, this traffic, of all others, is the most criminal.—It is tampering with the life of man, and for the mere sake of lucre, making merchandize of the unfortunate.—To whom is the cause imputable? The legislature may say, that they have invested the college of physicians with the power of preventing it.—It behoves the legislature to enquire why this practice has been suffered to be carried on for so many years, without even a detection or prosecution; and why the college

have neglected this important part of their duty.—In the enquiry, every member of the executive government is interested. It is a duty incumbent on them, to take cognizance of acts of omission, as well as commission, particularly where they affect the dearest interests of the community. On this subject a late writer, in a letter to Sir Vicary Gibbs, makes the following emphatical remarks :

“ When the charter was first granted to the college, the state of commerce in this country, as well as the state of physic, (for they naturally go hand in hand,) was very different from the present period. The idea of sophistication then had little entered the head of the apothecary. It is only the invention of a scarcity, and consequent dearth of articles, and the effect of extended commerce. He had not then learnt to mix opium, an article of high price, with extract of poppies, a cheap article, and form them into a compound. He had not learnt to mix the powder of Peruvian bark with the bark of the cherry-tree and other indigenous productions. These arts are only



learnt by time, by temptation holding its lure, and by corruption of manners: that they exist, and are daily and hourly practised, is well known, and what no druggist can deny. Thus the qualities of medicines being debased, the physician is disappointed in the effects of his prescription, and the patient becomes discontented with his physician. I appeal to the Fellows of the College themselves, how often they have felt disappointed from this baneful cause, and had reason to curse the drugs of the apothecary's shop\*. It is from this the healing

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\* That many a sudden death has been occasioned by the carelessness of the apothecary's assistant, or the assistant's boy, does not admit of a doubt.—How often is laudanum administered by mistake, for some other tincture? How often is arsenic powder put up instead of calomel, or antimonial powder? Is it any wonder, then, that people should be so frequently found dead in their beds?—Dr. Clarke, in his lectures on the diseases of women, relates a case of a lady, for which he prescribed the extract of hemlock in the form of pills; the dose of which she was instructed to increase gradually till it produced a slight dizziness of the head. The lady, in following the doctor's directions,

art is thrown into discredit, and remedies of the highest virtues in their genuine state abandoned by physicians, from the iniquitous arts of those that supply the articles.

“ Physicians, at first, were bred from the shop and the still: the hand that prescribed, administered also the healing draught. They were not the children of luxury and refinement, who were satisfied to attend our academical lectures, to learn their profession in theory, and vault into their carriage to see patients, without the previous routine of practical information fit for it. No! they first went through every professional department: they began as the servant, they ended as the master.

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pushed the dose so far, that she took upwards of a drachm in a day without experiencing any inconvenience. When the pills were exhausted, the prescription was sent to another chemist, who, in preparing it, made use of fresh extract of hemlock, and the lady, by continuing the increased dose, was nearly poisoned, and would very probably have lost her life, had not vomiting soon succeeded. Too many of such instances are daily occurring.

The still greater necessity from this plan at the present day than even in former times, allow me now to state to you : the early practice was more confined to simples than the present ; chemistry was more confined in its operations, and its principles less understood. A new creation has arisen in this science, and with it the extension of chemical medicines. To search the shop of an apothecary, and judge of the qualities of his articles, requires both experience in the knowledge of drugs in general, and also a ready acquaintance with the practical part of chemistry and the several products this science has given to medicine. What physician, then, in the superficial application made to chemistry and pharmacy, as a part of the order of his studies, is now-a-days competent to this task? The charter seems to have been sensible of this, for it directs, in their visits, the College should be attended by two of the apothecaries' company, and even one of the grocers! But even suppose with this assistance they set out upon the task, can it be successfully



employed without a deliberate and painful application of the chemical tests which are established to ascertain the purity and genuine quality of bodies? And it is now the painful part of my address, to state to you that this important duty of the College—a duty paramount to every other, and the only meritorious one in their charter—has been *almost never* performed, and where so, only in a cursory and partial manner, without an attempt at any complete search, such as their charter, such as the safety of the public demands. Apothecaries have been thirty years in business who never have had a visit of the College deputation; and when this deputation has even made a visit, it has been in such a trifling and insignificant manner as only betrayed their ignorance, and gave opportunities of even the shopmen and apprentices to smile at. Some laughable facts of this kind might be produced.

“ But even allow (which is not the case) that the College was competent to the trust, the performance of it must be rendered

abortive by the very attendance of part of the Apothecaries' Company. When articles have been questioned as to their quality and genuineness in some partial visits, the reply has been by the proprietor of the article : "This article was got from Apothecaries' Hall," an answer which at once seals the mouths of the deputation. To this may be added, (and a fact much to be lamented,) that the physician in general depends upon the apothecary. It is often from an error of this first medical attendance the fees arise, and attention of the physician is required ; the physician, therefore, whatever may be the quality of his medicines, dare not quarrel with the apothecary, who is properly his sheet anchor and only support ; and those who have had the integrity to do so, as a memento to the rest, have generally walked on foot instead of riding in their carriage.

" But to bring this subject home to yourself, to press it on your own feelings, let me state what may be your own case, and then defend the college if you can. You are

possessed, no doubt, of those near ties in domestic life which sweeten the rugged path of duty, and prove your solace, your chief satisfaction, in what has been called emphatically, too often with justice, this vale of *tears*,—a wife, a son, or what perhaps you prize equally, a valued friend. One of these, who forms in a manner part of yourself, whom you have lodged in your *heart's core*, is seized with an acute or violent disease, and the aid of the physician is called to his relief. The physician you select on this occasion is one in whom you have the fullest confidence: he is perhaps bound to you by obligations of a strong nature, which fill his mind with sentiments of gratitude towards you. He watches with patient attention the crisis of your friend's disease; he participates in all the feelings of your tortured mind; and as the crisis draws near, his experience informs him *now* is the time to save his patient, and to join energy to the decaying powers of life to master the disease. He informs you with confidence, he will be able to make a cure. Recovery



will take place. Your hopes are elevated by his opinion, and he prescribes with the confidence of a man of much experience who has seen the same disease in all its varying shapes, and cannot be mistaken in the flattering issue he has predicted. The prescription on which, at this critical period of the distemper, the fate of the patient hangs, is administered : the decaying energy of the frame is no way roused by its influence ; the fleeting powers of life receive no renewed animation. The fatal termination takes place, and “ his spirit ascends to that Being who gave it.” The eyes of your valuable friend are, alas ! closed, never to open again. What are your emotions in the first paroxysm of your grief ? Do you not blame the physician who could delusively flatter your hopes ? Your blame is perhaps conveyed in strong, in frantic terms, suited to the disorder of your mind. As a man of sensibility and attached to you, and confident that his opinion was founded on just grounds, the fruit of much observation, he is led to enquire into the cause of

its failure. With an anxious hand he tastes and examines the remains of the prescription he had last ordered, which was intended to be the restorative, and to act as a healing draught. How much is he surprised to find it is not what he expected; and, on proceeding to analyse it, that it has been composed of articles rendered either insipid, or of a deleterious nature, by sophistication. He dares not unfold what he has discovered: the deed is done, and cannot be recalled. That such is too often the case, every physician will bear witness, and you have only to pursue the communications made to Dr. Harrison on his plan of medical reform, to learn that such sophistications are general through every part of the country, and call loudly for legislative interference: that interference should accordingly begin at the fountain head, and the College should be called upon by you to know why this great—this fundamental duty—is, and has been neglected? With what indignation, (and you will excuse my sentiments on this occasion) did I hear you,

a few days ago, supporting the rights of that very College, the source of all the present evil complained of! Had you been possessed of the present facts, could you deliberately have done so, and not blushed while you was sounding their panegyric? They have shown, by their own tale, a keenness of acrimony in the prosecution of individuals, even to the extent of *twelve* within the year, because it interfered with their own particular interest; but they have totally neglected the *public good*, because their private interest was not promoted; on the contrary, rather injured by it, because such search as their charter enjoined would not fail to give offence to many whose articles might be of a deteriorated quality. Could I view these representatives of the College attending in Court, and enjoying their triumph over an individual, in any other light than as privileged culprits, whose conduct deserved ten times the reprobation of the gentleman they were prosecuting\*? The hour, however, I hope, of retribution, is come. I have opened

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\* See their proceedings against Dr. Wm. Dick,



your eyes, and placed before you the means of performing one of the greatest acts of public good that it is in the power of an individual armed with authority to do. You were once associated with a Fox, a Sheridan, an Erskine, and other great men in the cause of freedom, and in the necessity of political reform—in bringing the constitution back to those congenial principles which the lapse of time has impaired. But though good and laudable this object is now, can it bear a comparison with the present subject? Would it make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before? Or would it increase the population and strength of the country? Both these points are embraced by the present application; give health, and you promote industry, you want loins to your great strength and vigour to the constitution. This cannot be done without medicine; it will and must be employed. Of what great importance, then, is its quality?

“ From these views opened to your consideration, you are imperiously called upon

to investigate the present subject. You stand in the place of your sovereign, as the representative of that monarch, who wishes to be considered as the father of his people. The power with which you are invested, you know well, is a short-lived one ; snatch, then, the golden opportunity of doing your country the greatest service in an individual's power—a service which will hand down your name to the latest times with deserved respect and gratitude. No party interest is here concerned, or should have any weight in the grand consideration of public good.”

A second letter on this subject by the same writer appears in the *Medical Observations*, of which the following is a copy :

“ *To the Right Hon. Sir Vicary Gibbs, Attorney-General.*

“ *Sir,*

“ My last address to you conveyed the criminal accusation of a great, a learned, and perhaps, in public estimation, a respectable body—It concerned a subject dear to yourself, dear to the interests of humanity, and, for the reasons then stated, I can have no doubt it made a suitable impression on your mind, and that amid the hurry and bustle of public affairs, you have found a moment of lei-

sure to *pause* on the facts I suggested, when your own reflections have, in spite of yourself, in spite of the influence of the College, whispered this unwilling, this undeniable truth: "Here is a *criminal neglect of duty*, pregnant with the most serious consequences to the Public Health; and from which it must have long suffered." As the accusing spirit, I must still proceed—I have unfolded the magnitude of the evil; I must not leave you, till I have also imparted the remedy.—There are public evils, which it is sometimes prudent for the statesman to interfere with till a fit occasion—This, however, is one which cannot be too early rectified. It saps the very vitals and energy of the state, and every moment of delay affects the health and well being of the community. No motive of expediency can be here resorted to, for no statesman would dare to oppose it in the face of the public, however warped he may be by private friendship or party influence—The health of the people is a *sacred* subject—The neglect of it, taken in every point of view, both as it regards the individual as well as the state, is the *worst of crimes*. By this neglect the peace, the comfort of families is destroyed—The female deprived of her protector and support, the child exposed in the helpless period of infancy to be deprived of its parent before conscious of the loss it has incurred. The magnitude of this neglect is equally striking, when viewed on a more extended scale, as affecting the strength and population of the state. With this impressive picture before you, can I doubt your being actuated by the feelings of a man—Can I doubt your former professions as a patriot, or can I doubt



your desire to perform what your official character demands ?

“ Sift the subject to the bottom—ascertain the truth of my assertions, then act as an *Attorney General of England ought to do, zealous for the public interest, regardless of his own in the public good.*

“ That the public at large are animated by the strongest conviction of the evils, arising from the sophistication of medicines, has been of late abundantly proved. Among the companies proposed to be instituted at the present moment, is one entitled *The Genuine Drug Company*, which, though not publicly announced as the other great companies have been, had its subscription filled among the private circle to whom it was imparted, in not more than ten days. This could only arise from a conviction of the *necessity* for the measure, and a *confidence* in the *abilities* and *rectitude* of those who had promoted it—One of the principal promoters of this institution was my valued and respectable friend Dr. Campbell, against whom you were so lately the able, though had you known him, as you stated then you did not, I am persuaded, you would have been the reluctant counsellor. To his very accurate, just, and scientific report, I shall refer you on this subject. He there traces the progress of pharmacy, and enters into the reasons of the adulteration of drugs and chemicals as connected with the very improvements of the day. The principle of self-interest, which, it is too well known, directs all trade, has thrown the preparation of a variety of medicines into the hands of the manufacturer. The apothecary, the original pre-

parer of them, has found it more for his advantage to attend to the sale of them, by seeking after practice, and the visiting of patients. He buys the articles therefore often from this first source in a sophisticated state ; and he wants too often the necessary knowledge, as well as leisure, to examine them and detect their debasement. He knows the public will *swallow* them, and *swallowed* they accordingly are. Such is the state of the evil, which my respectable and scientific friend has so ably depicted, and wished it was in his power to correct. Will any part of the legislature call in question the utility of an institution of this kind ?—Those persons who do, can be no friends either to *themselves* or to their *country*. The evidence of the evil is impressed on the public mind, by their own knowledge and conviction of it, and those who will be hardy enough to oppose it, when it comes before the legislature, must oppose a mass of facts, which no ingenuity can get the better of. By an institution of this kind, conducted by scientific characters, one farther and important advantage would be gained. New processes for simplifying and expediting the preparation of articles would be brought forward, so as to lessen the expence of genuine medicines, and even in a commercial point of view, promote the interests and revenue of the empire. But this subject belongs properly to another place, and it was only necessary to introduce it here, to show the conviction the public possess of the necessity for improvement. Every improvement of this kind can only benefit so far as its limits extend, not embrace the whole correction of the evil—Its example, however, may be a powerful incen-

tive and produce imitation. It may lead the College to a sense of their own inability, which, I presume, every member in his own mind sufficiently knows, and make them anxious to see this duty of *ascertaining the qualities* of medicines transferred to other and more experienced hands.—Conceiving then that the College will see the propriety and necessity of this measure, that *they* will not give a farther proof of their weakness by their obstinacy in claiming to retain a power they have *rarely* exercised, and are *unfit* to exercise, I shall propose a plan, which will both do *justice* to the public and to the College, in rendering them the organ of its communications.

“It is perfectly clear, that when this duty of searching the apothecaries’ shops was first imposed on the College, the members were both much fewer in number, and their practice less complicated. The physicians of those days were, therefore, more competent to the task, and it was also more readily done—At present, the great extent and encreasing population of the metropolis render it an office of such magnitude to make the inspection, that it forms entirely a business of itself.—On this ground I would propose that a *Board* should be established for the purpose. That this Board should consist of a certain number of *able chemists and druggists*. That the number of apothecaries shops in the metropolis should be ascertained, and the number of the Board correspond to the duties required—That this Board should make a *monthly* visit to each of the shops, within the environs of the College charter; that they should there examine the purity of each article, not in a visit of *five minutes*, but by



using the proper chemical tests, and giving the examination *due* time and attention—That their reports should be regularly laid before the College, stating those places where articles have been found faulty, and noticing in the same manner those which have been discerned of a more than common excellence and purity.—By such reports given to the public through the College, many advantages would arise; apothecaries would be stimulated to attend to the preparation of their articles, and to take care in what state they purchase them from the manufactories—The Board should also have the inspection of the manufactories themselves, where the foundation of the mischief is first laid—The report should point out to the country dealers, where best to apply for particular preparations.—In the forming of this Board, all members of the Apothecaries Company should be excluded from it—The Board should consist of members fully competent to the office, without any interference; and the College should be a check upon the Board, that their duties are completely executed.

“The expense of such a Board is the next consideration—The College, you well know, enjoys a monopoly of practice within the district where the Board are to act. The College originally undertook this duty, which the Board are to perform—The performance of this duty was one of the chief inducements for granting their charter. Besides their monopoly, the College derive a certain sum from every one admitted into their body. The payment of this Board should belong to the College alone; and the government have no title to

be loaded with any expense on the subject—Government have performed their part. They gave a charter as a *saered trust*, in the language of Lord Mansfield, *coupled with certain conditions*. The failure in these conditions, particularly of this most important one, ought certainly to forfeit their charter—nay, so very much aware were the College themselves of this importance—that a mulct or fine is imposed by the College themselves on those members, who were appointed to this office, and neglected it, of forty shillings a year then, in the reign of Henry VIII. ; a sum of some consideration, however trifling it may sound at present.—These fines, if collected from their members, would now amount to *several hundred pounds*—which, had they been left in the power of a public informer, instead of being left in the hands of the College, would have stimulated that learned body to the exercise of their duty.—But such is the effect of time in every human institution. The original principles that give energy and vigour to the machine become impaired. The best regulations get into disuse, and nothing but a renovation of the first constitution in its purity, can stop the evils which the lapse of ages and contingent circumstances produce. These, Sir, are a few suggestions that public duty, paramount to every other feeling, has forced me to lay before you. They are not the child of idle speculation.—They are the fruit of experience and facts, for the truth of which you are referred to undeniable sources. These sources are open to your investigation ; your official duty calls you to this enquiry ; public justice demands it.—While the community are deceived by the

most dangerous system of quackery, on the one hand, the toleration of patent medicine, under the authority of government, and for the sake of a revenue which is too trifling to be noticed, compared with the national injury it produces; they are equally hurt and deceived, perhaps more so, by the neglect of duty in the College, on the other; for they swallow the medicine of the regular practitioner under the impression of its *genuine* quality and unadulterated nature, and that they are guarded, by being in the hands of the regular practitioner, from the evils which affect empirical ignorance.

“ If they go to the patent-medicine shop, they go with their eyes open, and the consequences they have themselves to blame for : but if they confide their lives to the physician or apothecary, that confidence ought not to be betrayed, which it clearly is from the statement of facts now exhibited. I shall therefore close here this part of the subject, and trust it to your care. If the College, as is hinted, is to apply for a new charter, the first question to be put to the President and Censors is, *Have you performed the duties of the old one ?* At the bar of the Legislature the answer will be made manifest to the blush of that body, and you cannot be *hardy* enough, were you ever so disposed, to be their *defender there*. I have told you where “ you may see with your eyes : it has been heard with your ears. *Faith* is not required.” You have the *full* means of being *convinced* in your own hand. My next letter shall embrace another point.”



The omission of this part of their duty is the source of quackery—for the college have as much right to examine the shop of the vender of nostrums, as that of the apothecary ; but had they regularly inspected the articles of the shops of the apothecaries and chemists, would any retailer have dared to have sold spirit of turpentine, under the name of essence of mustard\* ;—paregoric

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\* These specifications having been published, the College cannot plead ignorance of them. We need only give the following copy to prove the ignorance and impudence of the inventors of specifics :

“WHITEHEAD’S ESSENCE OF MUSTARD.

“*The following is a Copy of the Proprietor’s Specification, entered at the Patent Office.*

“Take of the whole plant and root of the white and brown mustard, and the white and brown mustard seed, any quantity, and with a sufficient quantity of water, distil therefrom the essential oil ; put this essential oil, with an equal quantity of essential oil of juniper, and the purest alcohol, into a retort, and, with as gentle a heat as possible, draw it over, and keep it very closely stopped.—Digest cloves in fresh quantities of alcohol, so long as they afford any flavour ; filter it ; put it into a cucurbit, and distil off the spirit, till it begins to

elixir, for essence of horehound and balsam of liquorice ;—tincture of benzoin, for essence of honey\* ; and about 200 more

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thicken. To this residuum, add a *proper quantity* of distilled water, and it will precipitate ; divide this precipitate into flat cakes, and dry it with a gentle heat!!—Digest gum guaiacum in the purest alcohol ; filter it ; distil off a part of the spirit, till it begins to thicken, precipitate with water, and dry it in the same manner,—Take of the above preparation of cloves, one pound, three ounces ; the preparation of guaiacum, two pounds three ounces, seven drachms ; balsam of Peru, one pound three ounces, five drachms ; balsam of Tolu, one pound nine drachms ; intimately mix the whole together, and stiffen it, so as to form a hard mass, with Russia castor, powdered ; with which castor three drachms of the above essence of mustard is to be mixed ; to each pound of this mass, six drachms of genuine Kermes mineral is to be added, and then formed into pills. Take brown mustard seed thirty-six pounds, pour thereon forty gallons of essential

\* A young lady asked her physician if she might take the essence of honey for a slight cough—he replied, that it must be very simple, and if it did her no good, it could do no harm—so ignorant was this physician, that he really thought it was prepared from honey, The stimulating properties of the tincture produced such formidable disease of the lungs that she died within a month of pulmonary consumption!!

medicines, under fictitious names? Look at the ridiculous specifications of quack medicines in the records of chancery, for which government have granted patents—

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tial oil of turpentine, *boiling hot*; let it stand till cold, and then put it all into the still, with a sufficient quantity of water, and draw thirty-nine gallons; to this add two pounds of animal oil, or oil of hartshorn (rectified by repeated distillations in a retort, till divested both of colour and smell,) fifty pounds of camphor, four pounds of essential oil of rosemary, four ounces of essential oil of cloves, half a pound of English oil of lavender, and six drachms of the above essence of mustard.

“In witness, &c. this 27th day of April, 1798.

(Signed) “ROBERT JOHNSTON.”

“The object of Mr. Robert Johnston, in composing this recipe, was manifestly either to insult the understanding of his majesty’s privy council, or confuse those who might be curious enough to examine the specification at the patent office. On presenting such a recipe, what should have been the conduct of government? In our opinion, the reverse to what it has been. Instead of granting a patent, they should have granted a warrant for taking him into custody, and inflicted on him some condign punishment, for offering them so pointed an insult. Does not the grant of a patent for such a most absurd and ridiculous recipe, cast an indelible disgrace on our country?

“Is it to be wondered at, that physicians on the



can they plead ignorance of them? and whose place was it to represent to government the impropriety of granting patents for such unchemical and ridiculous compo-

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Continent should pronounce the medical men of this country a set of illiterate quacks, when, for such a composition, government will grant a patent? To prove the ignorance of the inventor, we need only notice the two first lines of his recipe—To distil the root of the brown and white mustard, for the essential oil.—Now, who ever heard of the essential oil of the root of the brown or white mustard? None do they possess. The medicinal virtues of the mustard do not even reside in the oil of the seed. The oil is nearly as mild as that of the almond, and in no respect superior as a medicine!! The cloves are directed to be steeped in alcohol, then filtered, and the liquor afterwards distilled, and the residuum to be precipitated in distilled water, which precipitate is to be dried in flat cakes, by a gentle heat! Can any thing be so truly absurd? The guaiacum is to be dissolved in alcohol; a part of the spirit to be afterwards drawn off by distillation, till it thickens, which is to be precipitated with water, and dried in cakes! Here again he betrays his ignorance of chemistry. Such a residuum is not miscible with water. How then is a precipitate to be made? Indeed the whole is nothing but the most absurd nonsense, and we defy any chemist to make the *Essence of Mustard* by these directions.”

sitions?—The members of the privy council being unacquainted with chemistry, were not competent to detect the impositions that have been practised on them with such audacious effrontery.—It has been said by some physicians, that it is derogatory to them to interfere with quackery, and yet they acknowledge that many thousands of his majesty's subjects are annually destroyed by it!!

That the suppression of quackery was one condition on which the charter was granted, appears obvious, by the following extract from the statutes.

*“ Of suppressing Quacks.*

“ Whereas there is a great number of unskilful persons who annoy the commonwealth, and it lies on us, by the prescript of the King and Parliament, that we take care of the health and security of the people; we appoint and ordain for the more commodious extirpation of such, that whom for certain we shall prove to be unlearned and dishonest, that we punish not only by fine and imprisonment, but also that we certify

by our letters to the magistrates and governors of every city, province, or jurisdiction, where such impostors dwell, that they are to be reckoned unworthy the name of physicians, and therefore to be treated as other citizens.

“ Let this be the form of the letters :

“ *Form of the Letter to the Magistrate.*

“ Worthy sirs, We certifie you that H. M. of your province, quack, living in the street S. is a man unlearned and unskilful of physick, and in no wise is of our College ; wherefore you may according to your law elect and chuse him and all others who have not letters testimonial, signed with our seal, to serve all fit offices of your city, and to compel them to act and perform other things, which is granted to your authority to command.

“ These we have written to that end, lest those silly impostors of the commonalty, should under the name and pretence of physick, evade your privileges.

“ Given from our College,” &c.



For the abominable neglect of this part of their duty, in the performance of which every individual is interested, the college deserve the severest reprehensions—For our own part, when we consider how shamefully this body have abused the power with which the government have invested them, the little they have done either for the benefit of the profession or the good of the country, we are at a loss for terms to express our detestation of their conduct\*.

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\* The Editors of the Medical Review, in their comments on the late conduct of the College of Physicians, observe, “how has that body of men conducted themselves for these 150 years past,—how unmindful have they shewn themselves of the great purposes of their institution,—how neglectful of the sacred trust committed to their charge!—how little have they done for the *advancement of medical learning*!—how, under their rule, quackery has flourished, and genius and merit been proscribed:—in one word, how have they sacrificed the best interests of their profession, to gratify their thirst for aggrandisement and monopoly of power!—recollect their conduct towards the members of a respectable ‘association’—how the Harveian orator came forward and denounced them to his brethren

The College, it is said, and we have reason to believe it to be true, intended to apply to the legislature for some additional

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as a set of obscure hostile men, '*alieni homines*,' seeking not so much the improvement of medicine, as the subversion of their ancient authority; and caused the walls of that mansion, which was destined to be the tranquil abode of learning and of science, to resound with the cry of CURRAT AD ARMA! thus realizing the very words of the allegorical harangue, which an anonymous writer, a few years before, had placed in the mouth of the fury Jealousy, as he supposed it would appear with too much reason, to preside over the affairs of the college—

'To arms, to arms!' she screamed. At this the throng  
Recovering, recognised a sister's tongue,  
And press'd around her with an hideous grin.'

If members of the College have not been proprietors of quack medicines, they have certainly sanctioned quackery, by prescribing nostrums. Do not many of them prescribe James's Fever Powders, which do not possess any advantage whatever over the antimonial powder—Have not members of the College dined at Dr. Brodum's table? Are not many apothecaries licenciates in quackery, and expose nostrums for sale? Page 402 of the Volume of 'Selection of interesting Cases in Medicine, Surgery,' &c. a London apothecary accuses a licentiate of the College of recommending a nostrum, and indirectly accuses him of being the proprietor.—The

privileges, soon after their flimsy report on vaccination.—We are sorry the application was not made, because the House of Commons would then have enquired into the

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Doctor replies to these accusations in a new periodical work, entitled ‘The Monthly Compendium of Medicine, Surgery,’ &c. in which, in my opinion, he convicts himself.

It is a common practice with venders of patent medicines, to bring out a medicine under the sanction of the name of an eminent practitioner, immediately after his dissolution : thus we have Dr. Fothergill’s Nervous Drops ; Dr. Warren’s Stomachic Pills ; Dr. Hugh Smith’s Bilious Pills, &c. thus are those respectable names handed down to posterity in the schedule of the act of parliament for regulating the duty on quack medicines, as patronising the most infamous traffic existing in human nature.—A paltry pill is puffed off by Mr. Stringer, a licenciante in quackery, under the name of Dr. Hugh Smith’s Anti-bilious Pills, at a most extravagant rate, which is inferior to common pill of coccia : with the same nostrum are exhibited ginger and rhubarb pills, and Jamaica ginger, prepared by the particular directions of Dr. Moseley, a member of the Royal College of Physicians !! If the College of Physicians connive at such disgraceful practices, they may, (as a correspondent observes, page 305 of Selection of Medical Cases) with some propriety join in the chorus “Tanta-rara-rum, quacks all ! quacks all !” J. J.



nature of the present charter, and whether they had duly performed the duties it imposed on them. Finding that quackery, for the suppression of which their charter was originally granted, flourished most within the jurisdiction of the College, and that the sophistication of drugs is carried to a greater extent in London, than any other part of the country : indeed that the country is inundated with quack medicines from the metropolis, as well as supplied with adulterated drugs, instead of extending their power over England, they would probably have passed on them a vote of censure, and deprived them of their charter altogether.

Instead of harrassing the unlicensed practitioners in London, who are as well qualified to practise the healing art as themselves, we advise them to discard those sordid and selfish views by which their conduct has been so long governed, and regulate their proceedings on the principles of a *manly, fair, and liberal* policy, throw open their doors to all who shall be found qualified to enter, however strict the test of ability re-

quired may be, and no longer insult their brethren, their country, and common sense, by denying to a class of men, who will not yield to them in point of learning, talent, or zeal for the interests of their profession, the enjoyment of those privileges to which in reason and justice they are entitled,—merely because it can be said of them, that they have not gone through the routine of keeping some dozen terms within the walls of either of the English universities, where it cannot be pretended that even the first rudiments of their science are taught ;—when we shall see them do all this, and not till then, we will believe that they have the welfare of medicine, and the good of mankind at heart.

## CHAP. V.

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THAT a reform of the medical profession is necessary, no person acquainted with the practice can deny.—We are happy to find, that our remarks on the disgraceful state of medicine and the impolitic laws of the College of Physicians, have given rise to the rediscussion of this very important subject in the Medical Societies, both of London and the country.

At the anniversary of the Lincolnshire Benevolent Medical Society, held September 23d, 1809, Dr. Fawsett, the president, in the chair; when the business of the Society was concluded, Dr. Harrison addressed the meeting, on the indispensable necessity of an improved regulation in the



education and admission of practitioners, especially for the provincial districts of the united kingdom; which being under the present laws, out of the jurisdiction of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, are therefore most in want of medical enactments. He also stated what had already been done to attain this important object; and that the bill, now on the table, for regulating medical education and practice, was intended, if a sufficient fund could be raised in the mean time, to be presented to parliament in the approaching session.

Of the necessity of a medical reform, we have already given incontrovertible proofs; but whether the plan proposed by the Lincolnshire Society will place it on a more respectable footing, or tend to benefit the community, we have our doubts. In the first place, it appears to us, that in consequence of the society lamenting that the practice in the country is not sufficiently restrained by law, the legislature will suppose, that their object is the extension of the jurisdiction of the College to the remot-

est parts of the kingdom, whereas they should express their gratitude, that it is confined within a circumference of fourteen miles. What is the enviable state of medicine within the jurisdiction of the College of Physicians? The fundamental condition on which it was granted, was the suppression of quackery.—Now does not quackery flourish more in London than any part of his Majesty's dominions? Has not every street a vender of *patent* medicines? And is not the country chiefly supplied with nostrums from the metropolis? Another object of no less importance, was to prevent the sophistication of drugs; now is there a shop in London, that has not adulterated drugs in it, or medicines not properly prepared, according to the London pharmacopœia! What then, has the Society of Physicians of London done for the promotion of the medical art?\*

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\* But let the facts speak for themselves. Since the fellowship has been rendered exclusive, have not the most illiterate quacks and impostors, particularly in the metropolis, perpetrated their de-

bye-laws, have they not been actuated chiefly, if not solely, by sinister views? and do not their laws tend to suppress genius and retard medical improvement? The chief object of this Lincolnshire Benevolent Society, they declare to be to suppress the

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destructive practices without the slightest restraint or opposition, and in perfect contempt of the College? Where, since that period, can we find any thing useful or public-spirited in the corporation? Where are their efforts, as formerly, to detect impostors and expose frauds? Is not the contempt into which the ignorance and supineness, occasioned by the monopoly of the College, have brought the profession, even among the vulgar, the principal cause of the encouragement which credulous people give to the wonder-working nostrums of empiricks? Has not empiricism become so lucrative a trade, that many regularly bred physicians do not scruple *secretly* to participate in its profits? Instead of distinguishing competent physicians, have they not been degraded by being merely permitted to practise under a licence, originally intended and frequently given to apothecaries and dentists, to partial and inferior practitioners? Besides that for these licences considerably more is paid than for admission to the fellowship.—Their library is not equal to those of many individuals. They have no museum, no dissecting room. What was a laboratory has been long converted into a kitchen.



*most daring* quacks, and impose restraint on the rest! Now we presume it will be a very difficult task, properly to distinguish the quack from the regular physician. The whole system of regular physic, to a man of scientific attainments, must appear little

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They hold no literary meetings, maintain no correspondence, read no papers, bestow no prizes. They have edited one book, and published three volumes of essays, in three centuries!!!

What then do their corporate acts amount to? To arbitrary examination and admission; reading an annual oration, and a few lectures, which, although perfectly useless, cannot be dispensed with without *forfeiting the salaries annexed to them*; the *nominal* inspection of apothecaries' drugs; and the licensing of houses for the reception of insane persons, for which they impose heavy fines. Such are the immense services which the College of Physicians render to the community! Is it any wonder that they should have fallen into contempt, or that their authority should be called in question?—From this state of things has arisen that base system of *espionage* which is at present the opprobrium of medicine in this metropolis.

Happily the restrictive influence of the College has not yet extended to the country; and therefore we see the ravages of empiricism are there much less destructive, and regular medicine, upon the whole, conducted perhaps with greater ability than

better than quackery, and such, we are afraid, it will continue, till it gets into the hands of surgeons. Could a man of a philosophic mind, study medicine with any satisfaction? The predominant passion of the physician, is the acquirement of wealth

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in town. Under the present system the *art of rising* in the metropolis becomes that of *absolute intrigue*. The bulwarks of the monopoly are such as the most brilliant talents, unsupported, cannot pierce; and here we see the reason why men of modest merit, who detest such vile ways, frequently prefer settling in the country. But the College, it seems, threaten to extend their jurisdiction to all parts of the kingdom. Now, as the lives of the people in the country are equally valuable with those in town, it is somewhat surprising that the legislature, if they thought the influence of the College was so salutary in the latter, should not have sooner extended its benefits to the former. Had that body conceived it useful to themselves, or practicable, without the risk of an opposition which might bring their privileges into danger, thus to extend their jurisdiction, would they not long ago have made the attempt? I can scarcely conceive, however, that they are at present much inclined to venture on so rash an experiment, although it is confidently whispered abroad that they are at this moment endeavouring to *negociate* with government for a new charter."

C. MACLEAN, M. D.

and independence—the same are the objects of the quack ! Let us make a comparison between the practice of each. Dr. Stone, a fellow of the College of Physicians, published a treatise on the diseases of digestion—does it contain any thing new, or what was not well known before ? Dr. Solomon has published a Guide to Health, a title equally plausible. Dr. Solomon's object is to obtain money by the sale of his medicine, and Dr. Stone by the fee. The next question is, which has done most good by their publications ? The reply is obvious.

That physicians should be graduates of an university, is absolutely preposterous. The ridiculous title of physician should be entirely abolished ; superior titles or honours should be conferred as rewards of merit ; they would in that case produce a spirit of emulation, and stimulate genius.

The physicians of the present day, do not possess any knowledge superior to the apothecary—indeed, when they commence practice, they are much more ignorant of



diseases and their remedies. Besides, are the English universities proper schools of medicine? It is truly ridiculous, to say that a graduate of such schools can be a better practitioner than the pupils of the London hospitals. As to *purchased* diplomas, we know of no diploma that is not paid for. The difference between the honorary diploma, and the diploma of the English university, is, that one is conferred on gentlemen who can procure certificates of their abilities attested by two *respectable* physicians, while the other is granted without any previous examination in medicine, nor is it required that the candidate should be acquainted with medicine! If he has kept a certain number of terms, he is entitled to his diploma, although he had not attended to medicine, and knows as little of it as his horse, which kept the terms with him. An honorary diploma is therefore the most honourable. To make a *routine* physician, or a young man of genius a stupid fellow, we know of no place better than Oxford or Cambridge. If a

person be properly qualified to practise, surely it can be of no consequence whether he was educated in London, Edinburgh, or Dublin, as more must depend on the capacity of the person, than the school.—Surgery and pharmacy afford the best school for the education of a physician, and to this honor, if honor it be, every surgeon and apothecary should look forward. — How many apothecaries are there now in London, who are kept in the back ground by the impolitic bye-laws of the College of Physicians? Medicine, like literature, should be a republic. In the present state of medicine, the apothecaries of London are really not so well paid as the common porters ; and it is hard indeed, if, after ten or twenty years laborious practice, he is not allowed to participate in the honors and profits. Towards the physicians, the apothecaries have behaved with a liberality that does them great credit : yet, notwithstanding, if any apothecary wishes to give up pharmacy, and practise as a physician, he is to be deemed by the College an irre-

gular man, or a quack, although the probability is, that he is much the best acquainted with his profession. We would advise the Lincolnshire society to revise their present scheme, and adapt it more to the improved state of surgery, and let the inhabitants of London also benefit by it.

When the charter was granted to the College of Physicians in London, Oxford and Cambridge were proper schools for medicine, and England at that time a separate kingdom. Since that period, how have circumstances changed ! Medical science is not taught at either of the English universities, nor does England stand now as a separate kingdom. London is now the metropolis of an extensive empire, which has to boast many universities, the graduates of which have equal claims to participate in the advantages of the metropolis with those bred at Oxford or Cambridge. By the union of Scotland and of Ireland, the medical characters of both kingdoms have an equal right to look to the general metropolis of the empire ; and for the removal of the



obstacles that may prevent their appearance in this field of practice, is not the imperial legislature bound as much as to the observance of any part of the union of the two sister kingdoms,—a free participation of rights and privileges being the foundation of the connexion. But distinct from monopoly altogether, let us examine a part which militates more against the public welfare than any part complained of. This is the monthly fine or mulct of five guineas, for practising without a licence from the college. Thus may the health and lives of the community be compromised by a monthly payment in way of indulgence! May not any person, however ignorant and daring, be let loose to practise physic and commit depredations on the health of society, if able to pay this sum?

The fine is to be levied by information against the individual, and the court moved accordingly. The offender is first brought before the college to answer. He is brought as a culprit before his judges. All eyes are upon him at his entrance. The fastidious

forms of rigid monastic severity are kept up. *The doors are well closed and watched after his admission—A THING UNKNOWN IN ANY BRITISH COURT OF LAW—*If he is not in the most pleasant frame of mind when he enters this hallowed seat of science, he will be still less so, when teased by interrogatories without number, before the business is finished. If the culprit applies for directions to regulate his practice, he is told, *none will be given him, but the college will take care to punish if found offending.*

The college has very recently proceeded by a common process in law against Dr. Dick, for the recovery of penalties incurred for practising within their jurisdiction without a licence. The doctor suffered judgment to go by default, and paid the fines into court. He was willing in the first instance to have paid them without incurring the expence of a law suit. The college determined to carry it into the court of the King's Bench. Dr. Dick having suffered judgment to go by de-

fault, could then make no defence. Is it possible that the College of Physicians should be gratified in putting Dr. Dick to the expence of a law suit for the recovery of fines, the payment of which he did not refuse? But why prosecute Dr. Dick and not Dr. Clarke, Dr. Denman, and other unlicenced physicians practising in London, and why refuse to admit Dr. Dick after the admission of Sir Walter Farquhar, Dr. Babington, and Dr. Adams? Dr. Dick has practised with such great credit to himself for many years in the East Indies, that his Indian connections were induced to consult him in London. The Doctor, after acquiring an independent fortune by a most respectable practice in Bengal, determined to spend the residue of his days among his friends in England; and finding no part of the Island to agree with him so well as London, he was in some degree compelled to take up his residence in it. The Doctor visited his friends labouring under disease, occasioned by the residence in a hot climate, not from motives of aggran-



disement, but genuine benevolence and humanity. His success in the treatment of diseases of the liver so increased his reputation, that all who had heard of his skill resorted to him for advice; indeed so great was his practice, that it is said a certain Doctor, a fellow of the College of Physicians, who had written expressly on diseases of the liver, was rarely consulted\*.

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\* It is worthy remark, that Dr. Saunders about this time published a pamphlet *against* the use of mercury, although in his first work he extols it.—The following observations, which appear in the volume of Selection of Cases in Medicine, p. 268, on this extraordinary pamphlet appearing at this extraordinary juncture, may unfold the reasons of the liberal author.

“ A new work, from the pen of Dr. Saunders, has just made its appearance, *against* the use of mercury.

“ The Doctor’s opinions are as versatile as the metal, which readily amalgamates with many bodies. They are as easily detached from their connections, as mercury, by heat, is from the compounds it has formed. His opinions, like the metal, are regenerated, to form new combinations.

“ *Saunders against the use of Mercury.*

“ Mercury, although useful in the inflammatory

A gentleman of great respectability residing in Dublin, being affected with a

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stages of hepatitis in India, would not be equally suitable in *European* hepatitis!! Great danger might accrue from transplanting India practice. Many invalids who, by the help of saline purgatives and Cheltenham water, and the like, might have retained health for many years, are, from the rash application of mercury, hurried to the grave. Mercury has become so general, that even in the nursery, calomel is resorted to. *All* preparations of mercury acting upon the gums are injurious when febrile excitement is present, accelerates the pulse, produces buffy blood, and renders the secretions *acid*. Mercury is sometimes fatal in syphilis; syphilis may extend its ravages a great length of time before it extinguishes life. Syphilitic ulcers grow foul and phagedenic, and the local disease in creases, till mercury is discontinued.

“ If we were required to produce struma by artificial means, the action of mercury would probably the soonest accomplish the purpose!” *He* then ridicules the idea that so many diseases are attributed to an obstructed liver. Hence—“ Calomel produces (27) mucous and bloody stools, accompanied with tenesmus and prolapsus ani, and dangerous strictures of the rectum. Calomel improper in dyspeptic complaints, occasions convulsions in children, and factor in the stools of healthy persons. Calomel hurtful in gout and nervous affections, aggravates phthisis pulmonalis, producing

chronic disease of the liver, undertook the journey to London to put himself under the

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hæmoptoe." "I perceive a dangerous tendency (Dr. Dick, &c.) to extend its application. Calomel bad as a deobstruent, equally injurious in the cavity of the abdomen as in that of the thorax, especially in *strumous affections of the spleen*, and all tumours. Bad in *scrophulous tubercles of the liver*, and when applied to that organ in a chronic state; also in fixed and unremitting jaundice. In such cases life is shortened by mercury.—Known many cases of confirmed dropsy, where the believers (Dick and others) in the specific power of mercury have been *disgraced* by their *temerity*. In morbid state of the kidney, urinary passage, schirrous prostate and uterus, mercury shortens life. Mercury induces gangrene, and renders ulcers foul and phagedenic. A Dr. Chisholm boasted of the power of calomel; had twenty-seven recruits with fever; twenty-one of them died. The abuse of mercury in India, observed in the debilitated constitutions of those who, from the abuse of mercury, return from India to Europe. One common effect of mercury is mental derangement. Yet after all, I desire here to repeat, that *what I have advanced is not to be understood as a disparagement of mercury!*"

*Remarks by Dr. Campbell.*

"From the common effect of mercury producing mental derangement, I should apprehend that the poor old gentleman was labouring hard under its baneful influence. His ravings against his mercu-



care of Dr. Dick. The Doctor had then just been informed by the College of Phy-

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rial enemy may be founded in fact. Yet, after all, he wishes not even to speak of his foe with disparagement. The great utility of his friend's (Dr. Curry's) calomel in inflammatory hepatitis, and his own directions in the use of mercury in the chronic state of the liver, are as opinions deemed heretical,—so much for consistency. Even the admission of the utility of mercury in India is denied, and the diseased nabobs are brought home to be cured of the ill effects of mercury. The question remains for public decision, whether a man thus in his writings contradicting himself, is entitled to any attention. His opinions are as versatile and uncertain as the *Materia Medica* of the London College, the body to which he has the *honour to belong*,—a body that will not admit of the opinions and discoveries of genius and labour, unconnected with themselves. Doctors Dick, Yates, and other gentlemen, unlike Sir Lucas Pepys, physician to the army abroad, who has scarce ever been from London: these gentlemen, after twenty years of actual service, have returned to London with the high advantage of travelled experience. England is a commercial country; many of *their* companions abroad have also returned and settled in London. From an absolute knowledge of their medical powers, their old patients have again employed them, and recommended Dr. Dick and others, to such an extent, that many of the fellows of the London College have little to do,—here is the cloven foot! Doctors Dick,

sicians that he must not practise within their jurisdiction. So that if the gen-

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Yates, &c. have lately refused to be examined by the censors of the London College, concluding, that, wanting experience, they were not qualified for such an office. The fellows of the college are supported by *their* quondam companions of Oxford and Cambridge,—excellent judges of their convivial powers. The latter, supported by a monkish charter, are, by prosecutions, endeavouring to hinder the people of London from reaping the immense advantage brought into it by gentlemen returning from foreign parts.—But those who remain are quite sufficient to show the superiority of the naval, military, and Asiatic schools.—*We shall see which will succeed.* Dr. Yates is unhappily no more. Doctors Dick and Anderson maintain a high ground in London. I will not say that the present pamphlet against mercury, an article supposed to be used by these gentlemen, has sprung from motives of envy and opposition; but I shall endeavour to discover the true motives.

“There is a time in the life of man when he is unfit for battle. Dr. Saunders appears in the present pamphlet like old Priam in armour—the lance is feebly grasped. The mercury stands not high, but very low in his terrene mattras.

“That the dust of the earth, through the process of vegetation and animalization, should become animated and gifted with the faculty of thinking, or dust scrutinizing dust, is curious. The endowment

tleman wished to avail himself of the Doctor's advice, he must take a ride with him beyond the seven mile post, where the Doctor might prescribe for him; and his apothecary residing in London, might compound his prescription with his initials with impunity! Dr. Dick recommended his friend to consult Dr. Baillie; but the college had forbidden the members to meet an unlicenced physician in consultation!!—The gentleman had no confidence in any practitioner in London but Dr. Dick. Dr. Baillie being sensible of this, expressed his willingness to meet Dr. Dick. During this discussion the patient's case was in a

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is ascribable only to *omnipotence*. It is not surprising, that in the operation of this function, the part constituting the native clod, should too frequently attempt to stand foremost. The alloy, to a degree, is a necessary attachment; but beyond a certain quantity, the deterioration debases sterling value, and gives an injurious currency to a coin of comparative insignificance, as evinced in Saunders on liver complaints, and in his abuse of mercury."

See also Dr. Campbell's Critical Analysis of Dr. Saunders.



progressive state. His son being a member of the House of Commons, we hope he will bring it before that august assembly.

The question among the Doctor's connection is, Why did the college prosecute Dr. Dick? Was it because he was not competent to the practice of physic? This could not be the ground, because they had not examined him, and could adduce no instance of maltreatment. Besides, the Doctor, we have no hesitation in declaring, is as well acquainted with the phenomena of disease and cure as themselves.—Was then the object of the college to destroy the confidence the public had in him?—They required the Doctor to reside two years at an university, to render him eligible to an examination. Does not this imply a deficiency of medical knowledge? What, send a gentleman who has been in practice forty years to school again, in order to qualify him to prescribe gratuitously for the relief of suffering humanity! In this civilized country a man is prevented from exercising the most important duty of christianity! and

for no other reason than because the college may lose a few fees by it.—Will the college presume to say that a member of the British legislature may not be attended by his country physician during his stay in London, if he chuses it?—Is it not natural for a gentleman to wish to be attended by the medical man who is best acquainted with the peculiarities of his constitution? When Dr. Willis was called in to his Majesty, why did not the gentlemen in attendance refuse to meet him because he was not licenced to practice within the seven mile post? Why do their Majesty's physicians not refuse to meet Dr. Pope? The royal family have the greatest confidence in Dr. Pope, and very deservedly so; and if such objection was made, what would be the consequence?

Has not any member of parliament an undoubted right to consult a surgeon in preference to a physician, if he has a greater confidence in him?

At any rate, it is most cruel and inhuman to deprive a person in the last hours of his

life of the advice of any man, when his whole confidence is placed in him.

In the present state of medicine in London, a licenciate in quackery may prescribe his *nostra* with impunity. An apothecary unacquainted with anatomy, and although he has never attended the practice of an hospital, may visit and prescribe for patients without molestation, while a physician with an honorary degree, although he has practised forty years, and a surgeon, must not prescribe medicines!!

The following letter, published in the 2nd volume of the Medical Observer, as connected with Dr. Dick's case, merits particular attention.

*"To Members of Parliament who have been in the East and West Indies.*

"Gentlemen,

"There are certain subjects which press upon us by their own importance, and reach as it were the bosom of every one by the interest they create. Such a subject is the present one on which I am about to crave your attention, for it affects you in the character of legislators no less than in that nearer connection in which every man feels himself concentrated, whatever may be said to the contrary, *his own health and individual safety.*



“ Most of you, gentlemen, have been the residents in warm climates, where, in the acquisition of wealth, you have too often forfeited a more valuable gem, the possession of health, or have experienced, at least, the loss of that native vigour and pristine strength you carried with you from the British hemisphere. With your return to this country, you have consequently imported a valetudinary constitution, and the care of that stands necessarily with you, paramount to every other interest, as with it is connected not only life but every present enjoyment. In order that you may judge of the proper care that is due to it, allow me so far to trespass on your patience, as to point out the *peculiar state* which distinguishes the constitution of the inhabitant of the cold and of the warmer region, and then offer you some friendly suggestions on the subject, in regard to what concerns your residence in the *metropolis and seven miles round it*.

“ The constitution of the temperate and colder regions, it is well known, is marked by promptitude to action, connected with muscular irritability. The solids of the body are denser, which is well confirmed by comparing the weight of the Hindoo or Asiatic, with the European. The blood, the principal and most active of all the fluids, the storehouse from which the renovation of the system takes place, contains more of that matter in the European, on which the formation of flesh or solid depends, and there is also a greater proportion of it in the circulating mass. The discharge by the skin, as well as the accumulation of bile, is less, and the absorbent series of vessels possess greater energy and strength. Hence the use of animal

food, and strong fermented liquors, can be indulged in with greater impunity, and even continued for a length of time.

“These are the leading features that distinguish the habit of the colder regions, and it is only altered by contingent circumstances in the conduct of individuals, who, by indulging in luxury, and other debilitating powers, bring it to approach to that habit which peculiarly characterises the warmer atmosphere.

“In removing from a cold to a warm climate, a gradual change in the European constitution takes place. The circulation of the blood comes to be increased—the strong vigorous pulse of the colder region is changed for one weaker and more frequent. The respiration becomes more hurried as a less supply of oxygen or of the vital principle is afforded, which occasions a more reiterated action of the lungs, to give the necessary proportion under this excess of heat, for the continuance of health. Lassitude and languor come to be the concomitants of this state. The customary exertions and employments are soon experienced irksome, and are performed with more difficulty. The nervous irritability is increased. Impressions are more quickly received, but are not so lasting in their influence. The disposition becomes quick, acute, and too sensible—the secretions undergo the same change. They are increased to a remarkable degree. The skin becomes soft and spongy—the bile is augmented, and acquires peculiar acrimony and power.

“This is the wise provision of nature, that as the increased heat exalts the animalization of every part, particularly of the fluids, they may be retained



for a shorter time, and prevented from acquiring a noxious quality, which may act on the system as a cause of disease, while this increase of the secretions and more active energy of the absorbents naturally produce a disposition to costiveness.

“ From this statement it follows, that inflammatory diseases are the more general maladies that affect the inhabitants of the colder regions, or those derangements that consist in an over increased tone and firmness of fibre. The opposite diseases are those that attack the natives of the warmer regions—the continued action of heat and the augmented secretions beyond what the vital powers can bear, produce, as a consequent effect of their operation, relaxation of fibre, and a weakened or irregular exercise of the functions of the different organs. In proportion to this weakness is the irritability of the system increased, and the more so where the use of spirits and the other strong liquors of the colder climates are indulged in.

“ Such being the state of health produced by a warm climate, disease can only be prevented by the most guarded caution on the part of Europeans, a caution which is seldom observed, and which even goes only in part to rectify the evil. But the European cannot bear this wholesome maxim of restriction. He indulges in those pleasures of the table, and the other enjoyments of sense, which have been his favourite habits in Europe. The temperance which a tropical residence requires to counteract the too violent excitement of heat, and its injurious consequences, is disregarded by him. Like the Anacreon of Sir William Jones, he wishes, “ *a month to reign, and that is May.*” Hence he



becomes soon the victim of disease. Ardent also in the pursuit of those *golden* expectations which have allured him from his native land, his mind is too much, if not ever, on the rack. Thus an additional source is afforded for the production of disease to those causes already enumerated—a source, particularly the foundation of *hepatic* affections, which are the never failing attendants of a residence under a vertical sun. The European, therefore, seldom enjoys in his Indian Paradise, in spite of the luxuries that there surround him, a tolerable state of health. Disease, though recovered from, lays the foundation of a valetudinary constitution. This he carries with him on his return to Europe. It is the consequence of his acquisition of wealth, remains the disagreeable intruder on his repose, and too often marring his enjoyments for the remainder of life.

“The importance attached to wealth, and the superior advantages that are connected in every place with the seat of its government, naturally lead you, gentlemen, who have thus gained the means of enjoyment, to prefer on your return, your residence in the metropolis, or to make it at least your *fixed station*. From the statement I have made, and the truth of which your own feelings will too strongly confirm, the care of your health is the first object that arrests your attention. The diseases of the tropical regions, with the remains of which you are haunted, with those lingering consequences, if I may so term them, which ever prove a memento to your sensations, and at times occasion a pause in your most agreeable and most favourite pursuits, are *maladies* unknown in this country, in their

nature, symptoms, and treatment, unless by report. The bold energetic conduct which distinguishes the practitioner accustomed to relieve them in their natural hemisphere, would be regarded here as rash and injurious. Thus, in case of your requiring medical aid, a case that too often occurs, you must call in for that purpose those who are strangers to your constitution—strangers to the best means of opposing the peculiar morbid action of those causes which have undermined your health in your Indian residence, and which still preserves its dangerous grasp round your vitals. Whence, you will naturally ask, startled perhaps for the first time at the suggestion, proceeds the want of that appropriate assistance stood in need of in our situations, in the metropolis? It proceeds, it is fit you should be told, from that baneful source I have exposed on other occasions, the disgraceful monopoly of the college. It is your business as legislators to rectify it; it is mine to state the evil, and to shew its magnitude, as it directly attacks your own bosoms.

“Most of the medical men to whom you have been indebted for your recovery from disease while abroad, have emigrated *early* from their native country. With a half-finished education, they have gone as adventurers in pursuit of wealth, and have trusted for completing their professional knowledge to the experience they might acquire on their settlement. That knowledge, that experience, they have had ample opportunities of obtaining. These you have had occasion to prize, and to feel every gratitude for; though such acquisitions were not learnt either at Oxford or Cambridge, but in a more expanded scene of observation—on the banks of the

Ganges, or in the vicinity of the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. With some independence, not a large fortune, for the pursuits of medicine do not encumber too much with that; with much experience of the proper treatment of the European-Indian constitution, they return to settle in their native land. In doing this, they wish naturally to be freed from inferior medical drudgery, and to practise only in the highest department of the profession. The metropolis, for this purpose, attracts their attention, as it does you: here they know their professional abilities can be of most service to the public, by forming the chief resort of those who have been the martyrs at a former period to tropical diseases. But here a bar is put to their wishes, and to their best intentions for the benefit of the community.

“ They cannot practise unless they are members of the College, whatever their professional acquirements, whatever their extensive experience and high medical character may be: an insurmountable impediment is opposed to their introduction into this *singularly constituted body*, because they cannot perhaps, shew a residence of two years at a university. The former circumstances of their education preclude this. They are well acquainted with the book of nature, but they have perhaps nearly forgot their classics, and that is of more consequence with this body than all their professional knowledge, or acquaintance with diseases. They remain for ever excluded, and must see themselves give place to the raw school-fellow piping hot with Greek and Latin, who has perhaps hardly ever seen a patient, or vi-



sited at a bed-side. Could you, Gentlemen, as Legislators, suppose this to be so, or that such a constitution should exist at present in this country? It does, and by it you are precluded from that assistance in the hour of danger which could be only useful to you. You cannot ask these men to attend you as friends; they are prevented acting as professional characters. In this dilemma, what is the hardship of your situation? You are obliged to request the aid of a member of the College, of any one whom fame, or your apothecary says, is an *able physician*, though ten to one he has neither seen your disease, nor is in the least acquainted, except by report, with an Indian constitution. To such a piteous case, then, are you and your friends reduced, in a land reckoned of all others the seat of freedom, in consequence of an old *corporation act* of Henry the Eighth, and that too in a concern of all others the most dear, the care of your health, the snatching you from the pangs of fatal or lingering disease. The man of your choice, the friend, perhaps, of your Indian residence, in whom your firmest confidence is placed, on whom your very hopes of life and health rest, you are deprived of, for *delicacy* forbids you to ask him but in his professional character, as one you wish to remunerate; and the same delicacy, even if you did ask him, withholds him from interfering where he knows and feels he would be acting in *opposition to law*, not perhaps to *what is right*. For the truth of the statement I have now made, I appeal to yourselves. Look at the list of the College, and see how many can pretend to the knowledge of tropical diseases. That you have

many that pretend to catch you by advertisements, I know. We have books on the *liver*, books on *digestion*, and all the other catchpenny business of the times, which, like the bill of the quack-doctor, are, through the medium of the public prints, held up to your view, to tell you that such persons are the oracles of the day on these subjects. This traffic serves its end, no doubt, for a time. The sickly Anglo-Asiatic, landing from his Indian voyage, as he peruses the paper, is struck with it, and anxious for his health, is lured to the charm of the prescription. He tries it, but finds no relief. He reflects on the success of the treatment in India, and wishes his former medical attendants were here. That such has been the case of many of you, gentlemen, since your return to this country, I have no doubt, the subject, therefore, is to you peculiarly interesting. A new charter is about to be applied for to Parliament by the College. The members of that body should only be elected by their *fitness* for their professional duties, not according to the seminary which has given them education. It is your duty to enforce this, if your own health is dear to you, or that of your friends; to watch over every application which may be brought forward, and to prevent party influence having any sway on a subject where the public good is so much at stake. Surely, to support the interest of a few men, at the expense of a whole community, is what the British Legislature can never agree to; few members, it is supposed, would wish, from a predilection for Oxford or Cambridge, however they may have been the seats of their early studies, to risque

the loss perhaps of their own lives by a restriction, which might deprive them of the only means that in certain circumstances might save them, where a high professional character was thus prevented from acting in their favour.

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I shall conclude these observations with a few pertinent remarks on the College of Physicians of London, by the editors of the Antijacobin Review.

“ Considering as we do that the proceedings of all our incorporated societies constitute a leading feature in the national character, we naturally wish them to appear in the estimation of the thinking part of mankind, equally respectable for science and moral rectitude. While they assist the researches of the philosopher, disseminate his discoveries, and extend the practical advantages of scientific skill; while they display examples of wisdom, in their candour, justice, beneficence, and steady impartiality; they will always be respected and respectable, will maintain the dignity of the national character and manners, check the innovating propensities of pride, vanity, and presumptive ignorance; and teach reform to advance only in the path of right reason. While such conduct and principles are manifested by learned societies, or corporate bodies, their existence must be a general good. But if their labours are no longer marked by the hand of genuine science, if



they evince the most puerile ignorance, or dotting imbecility, at the very time that private individuals have carried the philosophical reputation of their country to a height unequalled by any other; and if their political conduct be disgraced by all the vulgar passions, by the most partial administration of their offices; if they not only check, but even contribute to establish and extend the general depravity of the times, they will deservedly lose all respect from their country; their culpable conduct will sanction the interested vociferations of factious demagogues, who "only in destroying find ease to their relentless thoughts," and although they may be tolerated for a time through the remembrance of better things, yet the indignant eye of virtuous contempt will sooner or later make them odious even to themselves."

*Antijacobin Review for October 1809.*

THE END.

*New Works just published by C. Mutlow;  
56, High Holborn.*

THE  
MONTHLY COMPENDIUM

OF  
*Medicine, Surgery, Midwifery, Phar-  
macy, &c.*

THIS work, conducted by a society of Physicians, Surgeons, and Chemists, is published on the first of every month, price One Shilling. It embraces all discoveries in the different branches of the medical profession, and communications of real merit. Of new publications, such extracts are given as will enable the reader to form his own opinion of their value, and the views of the author. The mean and dangerous practices of Druggists are exposed. In the pharmaceutical department are also given every month, the state of the drug market, and sales of drugs—the price current of drugs and chemicals to surgeons and apothecaries; and under the head of Quackery, the composition of nostras, and an exposure of empirical practices of regular and irregular men.

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